



1959

Richard Hooker and His Theory of Anglicanism

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Recommended Citation

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RICHARD HOOKER AND HIS THEORY OF ANGLICANISM

by

Marilyn Jean Becic

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

June

1959

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The disruptive and portentous period in history commonly termed the Protestant Reformation, was crowded with determined, forceful, and frequently bombastic men, moved to action sometimes by their own self-righteous conclusions, and sometimes by sincere conviction.¹

The course of the reformation in England as compared with the continental revolt was relatively peaceful and orderly, unattended by bitter internecine religious wars, and unrecoverable national prostration, but nevertheless boasting its share of interesting, strong-willed personages.²

Some fifty-nine years after religious change in England became a legal fact, a rather obscure English divine wrote a work entitled Of The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, which proved to be a foundational monument in the development of a theory of Anglicanism.³ Richard Hooker was not the type of aggressive, officious

¹The decisive years of the continental reformation were 1517 to 1564; in England, 1529 to 1603.

²This does not mean that the religious changes in England caused no reaction, but compared with the continental revolt, response was mild.

³This legal fact refers to the 1534 Acts of Parliament making Henry VIII head of the English Church and repudiating papal power.

ecclesiastically prominent churchman we might be prone to associate with so prodigious a religious apologia. He was an ordinary minister who rose no higher in rank than vicar and whose personal character was a composite of charity, shrewdness, and sincerity, with an unusual intellectual acumen that enabled him to analyze and synthesize issues in their proper perspective.

Contemporary accounts of Hooker's personality, when stripped of their slavishly laudatory garnish, revealed him to be a man of "loft and milde disposition," whose "height of learning and depth of judgement" were admirable qualities esteemed by even his ecclesiastical adversaries.⁴ Retiring and unambitious, another account explained, Hooker's wealth consisted "in his religious contentment, for he was "truly of a milde spirit and an humble hart, and abounding in all other vertues; yet he specially excelled in the grace of meekness."⁵ Hooker's first biographer, John Gauden, Bishop of Exeter, characterized his subject as having a body and soul in complete harmony, and whose "outward aspect and carriage was rather comely then courtly, his looks always grave and reserved. . . He went always, as if he meditated some great and good de-

⁴Richard Hooker, Of The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, ed., John Spenser (London, 1604), i. We have retained the original spelling, grammar, and punctuation in all quotations from primary sources.

⁵William Covel, A iust and temperate defence of the five books of ecclesiastical policie (London, 1603), 8-9.

sign."⁶ Although his friends were few, they were choice; while he himself evidenced in his temperament equal amounts of wisdom and meekness.

Except for the writing of the Ecclesiastical Polity, however, the life and career of Richard Hooker were not of such unusual brilliance that he would otherwise have earned the recognition of posterity. Due to the unavailability of records, the exact date of Hooker's birth is uncertain, but it is probable that he was born in either 1533 or 1534, in or near Exeter in Devonshire.⁷ His family was poor and if his early schoolmaster (whose name remains unknown) had not persuaded the elder Hookers that Richard should be given further opportunities, the boy would doubtless have been apprenticed in some trade. Fortunately, the family had one relative of means, John Hooker, then Chamberlain of Exeter, who agreed to maintain his nephew for one year.⁸ John Hooker then introduced Richard to the prominent John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury, who was so impressed with young Richard's potentialities that he became his patron. The boy was sent to Oxford about 1568, where he was placed under the tutorship of John Reynolds.

⁶Richard Hooker, The Works of Mr. Richard Hooker Vindicating the Church of England as truly Christian and duly Reformed in Eight Books of Ecclesiastical Polity, ed., John Cauden (London, 1662), 8.

⁷Cletus F. Dirksen, A Critical Analysis of Richard Hooker's Theory of the Relation of Church and State (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1947), 1.

⁸Church of England Biographies (London, n.d.), I, 10.

After Jewel died, Edwin Sandys, then Bishop of London, offered to contribute to the promising scholar's education and even placed his son under Hooker's guidance.⁹ This and the addition of another prominent pupil, George Crammer, had significance for the future.¹⁰ Meanwhile, Hooker acquired unusual proficiency in the arts, obtaining his master's degree in 1577, and an appointment as Hebrew instructor two years later.¹¹

In October, 1579, Hooker and Reynolds were expelled from Corpus Christi College, Oxford, for one month, because they opposed the official nominee for the presidency of that institution.¹² After reinstatement, Hooker continued his studies, and about three years later was ordained an Anglican divine.¹³ His first ministerial appointment in 1581 was to preach at St. Paul's cross in London, where his initial sermon evidenced the negative

⁹Izaak Walton, The Lives of John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, George Crammer, and Robert Sanderson (London, 1927), 168. Hooker's father lived for some time in Ireland as an agent of Sir Peter Carew. He was there in 1568, when his son was sent to Oxford. This absence seems to have left Richard especially dependent upon the patronage of others.

¹⁰George Crammer was the grandnephew of Thomas Cranmer.

¹¹Ibid., 171-174.

¹²C. J. Sisson, The Judicious Marriage of Mr. Hooker and the Birth of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity (London, 1940), 10.

¹³These early dates are tentative due to the lack of definitive records. The English Church was not yet signified "Anglican," but for purposes of clarity it will often be designated such in this thesis.

persuasion of his mind relative to the Puritan controversy.¹⁴

It is important to interpolate here that by the latter half of the sixteenth century, the Puritan movement in England had gained auspicious momentum.¹⁵ A group of ardent men influenced by the continental reformers, determined to purify the Church of England from rituals, ceremonies, and practices they believed to be contrary to Scripture. Opposition became increasingly forceful when Queen Elizabeth's (1558 to 1603) manipulation of ecclesiastical affairs began. As her methods proved more thorough than were anticipated, and her purposes grew clearer, the reformers' zeal intensified. They had endeavored unsuccessfully in 1563, 1572, and 1586 to introduce legally their form of church government through Parliament and Convocation. Now, their design was to establish a Presbyterian system within the national church despite lack of civil approbation. Making Puritan ascendancy even more ominous was its relative strength among nominally Anglican bishops and the lower clergy.

Briefly, Calvinist ideology worked toward the abandonment of "popish" remnants in the national church; the removal of advowsons,

¹⁴Hooker stated that there were two Wills in God. His first Will was that all men be saved; His second was that only those should be saved who accepted the saving grace of Christ offered to them.

¹⁵E. T. Davies, The Political Ideas of Richard Hooker (London, 1946), 5. The seeds of Puritan growth were all present by the end of Henry VIII's reign (1509 to 1547).

patronage, and episcopal authority; substitution of elders for bishops, with the government of the church to be entrusted to ministers, elders, and deacons; equality of the clergy;¹⁶ and exclusive reliance on the commands of divine law as a guide for human conduct.¹⁷

There were various Puritan influences in the life of Hooker himself. Most of his early associates and certain academic colleagues were inclined toward Calvinism, notably his uncle, John Hooker, and his tutor, John Reynolds. The incident of his expulsion from Corpus Christi College is a further example.¹⁸ Apparently, however, the mature Hooker saw little in the Puritan religion to recommend acceptance by rational men.

The period of Hooker's life from 1581 to 1588 has been significantly and amusingly immortalized by Izaak Walton (Hooker's first real biographer) as culminating in a tragic matrimonial mistake. According to Walton, while boarding at the home of John Churchman, a poor London woolen-draper, Hooker was tricked into marrying Churchman's daughter Joan, by the fatal combination of

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 8-11. Advowsons are rights of presentation to vacant benefices.

¹⁷Peter Munz, The Place of Hooker in the History of Thought (London, 1952), 3. At this period in the Puritan movement, the terms Calvinism, Puritanism, and Presbyterianism may be used interchangeably.

¹⁸Sisson, 10.

nearsightedness and a nature too easily imposed upon. This marriage brought Hooker unhappiness, for Joan was a shrew who never understood her sensitive husband, and who brought him neither "beauty nor portion."¹⁹

Recent scholarship has proven this interpretation erroneous, and has also corrected the date of the marriage, which Walton had established as 1581.²⁰

In September, 1582, Hooker was still at Corpus Christi College, for records evidence that he was granted a student's pension then. Although two years later he was presented with the vicarage of Drayton-Beauchamp, it is almost certain that he was an absentee parson. At that time Hooker was doubtless in London, pending his appointment to the Mastership of the Temple in February, 1585.²¹ It was during this sojourn that he became a resident in John

¹⁹Walton, 177-178.

²⁰While subsequent scholars of Hooker have found much in Walton that is spurious, they do not impugn his honesty or sincerity. They conclude that as a recorder of tradition, Walton simply accepted contemporary gossip about Hooker's family, and also the fate of his posthumous works.

²¹The Temple Church was not an ordinary parish. The property was occupied by the societies of lawyers and students of the law. The Inner Temple and the Middle Temple were held by a lease from the Crown. The original Knights Templars had been exempted by a papal bull from episcopal jurisdiction, and this exemption was supposed to have continued. The Master of the Temple took his place on the strength of his letters patent alone.

The Temple Church itself was erected in 1185. It was built on the plan of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and was dedicated by Heraclius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, to the Blessed Virgin Mary. In structure, the church is a rotunda surrounded by a circular aisle.

Churchman's home, a businessman and former city chamberlain of honor and means. The marriage was arranged during this period and according to the parish register of the family church, took place on February 13, 1588.²²

Perhaps Joan was not beautiful, but it is unlikely that she failed completely to understand her husband, and that she was not the choice of Hooker himself. Her dowry, furthermore, amounted to seven hundred pounds, a considerable sum in Elizabethan days.²³ As for Hooker, his conception of marriage as garnered from his writings, was always an idealistic, holy, and happy relationship.

The divine's appointment to the Mastership of the Temple drew him into the Puritan controversy in a very concrete manner, for the assistant afternoon lecturer, Walter Travers, was one of the most eloquent leaders of the Calvinist cause. Travers had been a preacher at the Temple from 1580 to 1584. When the then incumbent Master, Richard Alvey, died, Travers became a candidate for that office. Archbishop Whitgift of Canterbury was determined that no Calvinist should be appointed. Half of England's lawyers at one time or another lived on the Temple premises, and the continuation of Presbyterian teachings there, so the Archbishop reasoned, would result eventually in an overthrow of the established

²²Sisson, 20-21.

²³Ibid., 24.

English Church. Whitgift managed to convince Queen Elizabeth and Travers' supporters that such a man was not fit for so vital an appointment.²⁴ Hooker, a safe and at the same time excellent choice, was made Master. Travers, by Hooker's leave, remained as afternoon lecturer.

The debate between the two men became so strained that soon, the "Forenoon Sermon spake Canterbury and the Afternoon, Geneva."²⁵ For a whole year the controversy continued, and was ended only by order of the Queen. Travers was silenced on the grounds that he was not a lawfully ordained minister according to the Church of England, that he preached without a license, and publicly taught erroneous doctrine.²⁶ Apparently Travers was a convincing orator, because even a Hooker admirer of the caliber of Doctor John Gauden, had to admit that the two men "both had honest hearts, and good heads: Mr. Hooker was more profound, and the other more fluent."²⁷ Both civil and ecclesiastical leaders

²⁴Richard Hooker, Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: The Fifth Book, ed. Ronald Bayne, (London, 1902), 38-39.

²⁵Walton, 200.

²⁶Travers appealed the decision but was not given a really fair hearing. Some of the points of contention between Travers and Hooker concerned the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Church of Rome, predestination, and faith and reason. Hooker's sermons on "The Certainty and Perpetuity of Faith in the Elect," and "A Learned Discourse of Justification," contain the gist of what Travers objected to in Hooker's doctrine. See Gauden, 219-227.

²⁷Ibid., 30.

were now convinced that the Presbyterian threat had reached crisis proportions. It was time for a treatment of the problem of nonconformity which would justify the course of the national church and extinguish the Puritan raison d'être. The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity was thus conceived.²⁸

It is true that Hooker was disquieted and puzzled to have what he believed, revered, and loved, judged corrupt and wrong by Travers, whose learning and goodness Hooker appreciated; yet the projected work was more than just an apologia.²⁹ It was a positive theological, philosophical, ecclesiastical, and political document of prime importance, having the approbation of the spiritual heads of the English Church, then Archbishop Sandys of York, and Archbishop Whitgift of Canterbury.³⁰

Hooker himself saw in the Puritan movement a fundamental attack on human reason. Its challenge to the Church of England that nothing could be done without the express warrant of 'God's Word, he deemed biblical radicalism. There was actually no valid ground behind the Calvinists' conscientious objections. Their

²⁸Naturally those who held this opinion were either of the episcopal party or those who feared the political implications of Calvinism.

²⁹Francis Paget, An Introduction to the Fifth Book of Hooker's Treatise of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity (Oxford, England, 1899), 87.

³⁰Sisson, 4-5.

ideology was based upon the fundamental mistake of distrust and disparagement of all human reason, due to their belief in man's utter depravity. That amounted to a sceptical denial of all the foundations of certainty. The authority of both reason and history was thereby rejected; as if to make God's glory more apparent it was necessary to destroy the dignity of man.³¹

Hooker, therefore, rose above mere controversy and invective, and as was his genius, produced a work that evidenced an all-pervading charity, and an amazing talent for tracing all questions back to their first principles.³² Former apologists had relied primarily on the argument of expediency and the persuasion of ex-probation, but Hooker was different. He met the Puritans on their own ground, calling on Scripture to argue for him, but also tradition and reason, and examined not merely the errors of his opponents, but the grounds of those errors and the truth which they perverted.³³ Doubtless six years' teaching the law students of the Inner and Middle Temples had resulted in Hooker's imbibing a considerable comprehension of the principles of secular law.

³¹ Alexander P. D'Entrèves, The Medieval Contribution to Political Thought: Thomas Aquinas, Marsilius of Padua, Richard Hooker (Oxford, England, 1939), 107.

³² Davies, 34.

³³ Alfred Barry, ed., Masters in English Theology (London, 1877), 19. A significant invective apology antedating the Ecclesiastical Polity was John Jewel's Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae. Its emphasis was on liberation from Catholicism.

Moreover, he received the assistance and advice of his former pupils, Edwin Sandys and George Cranmer (both lawyers), and also that of Doctor John Spenser of Corpus Christi. Behind all was the figure of Archbishop Whitgift, deeply interested in the project. Hooker was not moved to write the Ecclesiastical Polity for purposes of personal gain or fame, and although accounts of his selfless humility are exaggerated, the contemporary acknowledgments that he was motivated by a "sense of duty, gratitude and compassion" toward the English Church,³⁴ and felt his knowledge "might profit" that institution are substantially correct.³⁵

The Ecclesiastical Polity, according to latest research, was written in the home of John Churchman, who extended his hospitality at that time not only to Hooker but to all who came to confer with him. The first four of the eight books, begun about 1588, were completed about 1593.³⁶ Edwin Sandys, Jr. financed the undertaking.³⁷ Although there was no legal contract between the

³⁴Gauden, 15.

³⁵Covel, 9.

³⁶The publication of the first four books of the treatise of the Polity, coincided closely in time with the passing of a Conventicle Act, and the execution of the Puritan dissenters, Penry, Barrow, and Greenwood.

³⁷Hooker had offered the manuscript to several stationers without success, because they feared a loss. Furthermore, no assistance came from those whom the cause of the Polity concerned. Apparently, the "Puritan scare" had lost its fearful connotations. Sandys invested the equivalent of about \$1,500 today.

two men, the copyright to Sandys was to cover the whole work of eight books. Sandys was to pay Hooker forty or fifty pounds, and in addition present him with a number of copies of the printed work as it came out in installments.³⁸

The Ecclesiastical Polity was a slow and difficult seller. It was not a good commercial proposition, for works in support of the episcopal party were not popular then. It took eleven years to sell the 1,200 or 1,250 copies of the first edition.³⁹ Sandys did little more than balance his accounts.

As for the remaining sections, the fifth book was published in December, 1597. The sixth and eighth did not appear until 1648; the seventh, in 1661, long after their author had died.

Hooker himself ceased to be Master of the Temple in 1591 when he was presented with the country benefice of Boscombe, Wiltshire, to which was added on July 17, 1591, the subdeanery and minor prebendary of Salisbury.⁴⁰ There is no evidence on record of Hooker's presence at either place. He apparently held these positions in absentia.⁴¹ It is fairly certain that he lived in

³⁸Sisson, 58.

³⁹Philip Hughes, The Reformation in England: True Religion Now Established (New York, 1954), III, 227.

⁴⁰Dirksen, 5.

⁴¹Sisson, 45. Hooker recognized and defended absenteeism, but for the following causes only: university study, employment in the households of bishops, or service with noblemen and princes. The reason for his non-residence would be comprehended in the first category.

London during this time and gave all his efforts to the writing of his great work, freed from the active duties of a parson and from the preoccupation of controversy with Travers. In January, 1595, he did take up his living as vicar of Bishopsbourne in Kent, where he died November 2, 1600.

His wife and four daughters survived him. Mrs. Hooker was appointed sole executrix of his will, with Sir Edwin Sandys and John Churchman as nominal overseers. The estate amounted to £1092. Certain charitable legacies were made and £100 was given to each daughter.⁴²

The authenticity of the last three books of the Ecclesiastical Polity is important enough to warrant special consideration.

There are three theories concerning their history. First, some argue that all the eight books were written in 1593 and the manuscripts thus sent to Whitgift were complete. Second, others hold that the remaining three books were left by Hooker in manuscript form and finished by others. A third opinion is that the latter sections were completed by 1593 and subsequently revised and made ready by 1600.

The accepted interpretation for many years was that whatever the preliminary history of these manuscripts, after Hooker's death they were burned and destroyed by sinister persons with the collusion of his widow Joan, leaving only fragmentary rough drafts so

⁴²Ibid., 14. Hooker's will is extant at Canterbury.

imperfect that it was judged unfit to print them until their satisfactory revision fifty years later.⁴³

Now, research has made at least this much clear. Arguing for the authenticity of the eight books are scholars who contend that although the title page of the first edition promised the whole work in due course, the time factor prevented the finished product by 1600. Five years were required to complete the first four books and three, the fifth book. It is unlikely that in the remaining years of Hooker's life (three) he could have finished the work in the intervals of the duties of clergyman in charge of a parish.

Furthermore, book five required a special license from Whitgift, an unlikely procedure if the whole work had been approved by him. And, Sandys withheld the twenty pounds payment agreed upon, pending completion of the remaining books.⁴⁴

After Hooker's death, Philip Culme, a trusted employ e of John Churchman, was sent to make an inventory of Hooker's books and manuscripts.⁴⁵ The papers were sorted and all that bore upon the last three books were entrusted to Spenser, who brought parts

⁴³Walton, 231-233.

⁴⁴Sisson, 89-92.

⁴⁵The manuscripts fell into the residuary estate to which Mrs. Hooker was entitled because they had not been bequeathed to any legatee. These she entrusted to her father, Sandys, Spenser, and others.

six and seven to a reasonable perfection by 1613.⁴⁶ The delay in printing was due not to differences in editorial policy but to disagreement over doctrinal matters. Certain sections of the remaining work were too papistical for Sandys and Crammer, whose ardor for the English Church had cooled with the passing of the Puritan crisis. Sandys, furthermore, was disinclined to undertake any further expense. It is probable from the records that remain that they suppressed certain portions too "high church" for their tastes.⁴⁷ This school of reasoning concludes that while there was probably omission by intent, especially in the sixth section, what remains is authentic Hooker. References to the coherence of style and doctrine throughout the entire work is also argued, as well as the verification of Bishop Gauden and chancery proceedings.⁴⁸

The other viewpoint is more skeptical. It emphasizes the variance in Hooker's opinions concerning the episcopacy between the earlier books and book seven, explaining the change as forgery

⁴⁶Ibid., 92-94. The eighth book was in the least completed condition.

⁴⁷Ibid., 101. These portions refer to a section dealing with the lay elders in an historical treatment of the priesthood.

⁴⁸Bishop Gauden was the first publisher of book eight. He stated that he printed it from Hooker's autograph manuscript, which chancery proceedings also verified. Gauden had an interesting career. During his lifetime (1605-1662) he managed to ingratiate himself with the party in control of the government. At the time of the Restoration he was made Bishop of Exeter. Later, in 1662, he advanced to the see of Worcester.

or at least interpolation practiced to promote the sale of the work and to make it more conformable with the course of the Anglican Church.⁴⁹ Bishop Gauden, a "thoroughly unscrupulous and ambitious man," is considered a poor verifiator of the authenticity of books seven and eight.⁵⁰

Still another theory, concerning the sixth book, is that it was never meant to form a part of the Ecclesiastical Polity proper, but was merely a "heap of papers accidentally coming next to a sketch of the preamble" of that section.⁵¹

With due allowance for some suppression and inevitable errors of editorship, most recent scholars accept the last three extant books as authentic Hooker, if not complete Hooker. But whatever the interpretation of the latter portions, all students of Hooker unite in lauding him as one of the greatest systematic thinkers of his age, and his Ecclesiastical Polity as one of the finest works produced during the sixteenth century.

The Anglican system in the early sixteenth century was in infancy, consisting of compromises, traditions, certain legal

⁴⁹P. J. Shirley, Richard Hooker and Contemporary Political Ideas (London, 1949), 45-53. In the earlier books Hooker had explained the origin of the episcopacy in terms of history, tradition and expediency. In the seventh book he proposed apostolic or divine origin.

⁵⁰Ibid., 45.

⁵¹Richard Hooker, The Works of that Learned and Judicious Divine Mr. Richard Hooker, ed., John Keble (Oxford, England, 1883), I, xxxviii.

statutes, and expediencies. It was the Ecclesiastical Polity of Richard Hooker that first lifted it towards maturity and gave it the foundation and rationalization of a way of life, in the realms of law, authority, theology, ecclesiastical government, and church-state relationships. Anglicanism today is not the order set forth in Richard Hooker's Polity, but his theory of that system is important because it was the first to provide a really effective raison d'être.

CHAPTER II

LAW

It was the insufficiency of the Puritan appeal to the letter of Scripture and their condemnation of any law and course of action not entirely based upon the Bible that caused Richard Hooker to begin the Ecclesiastical Polity with a description of the nature of law.⁵² He saw more clearly than many of his contemporaries that the English Reformation and the establishment of religion were fundamentally a question of authority. Through a discussion of law in general he could demonstrate that dissenting groups or individuals who rejected the civil and ecclesiastical laws of Elizabethan England, refused their obligations not only as members of society, but as rational beings as well.

His Calvinist opponents, in particular, had secured a presumption in many minds that they were right. Hooker was frankly surprised that there was not, thus, more reason in the Puritan movement than his close scrutiny was able to discover.⁵³ Although that group was persuaded that it was possessed of truth, "we

* 52 Much of Hooker's theory concerns Puritan "fallacies," and numerous precepts of his own Anglican thought must be garnered from his criticisms and "corrections" of Calvinist ideology. His own views are often incomprehensible unless so interpreted.

53 Paget, 91.

being as fully persuaded otherwise."⁵⁴

Hooker set before himself the tasks of explaining the origin and relationships of authority, and finding a more adequate basis for it than Scripture.⁵⁵

A vast panoramic view of law was thus unveiled by Hooker. He evidenced his Thomistic inclinations in the development of this theory in each phase except his conception of the law of the church.⁵⁶ Hooker's theory embraced a hierarchical idea of the world. Everything which exists has a cause and a purpose, and is so constituted as to achieve the purpose for which it was created. That which enables things to work as they do is law.⁵⁷ God has disposed all laws in nature and degree, distinct from the others. There is thus a succession of degrees which lead in progression from nature to God. At the apex is the first eternal law "which God before all ages hath set down with himself for himself to do all things by."⁵⁸ A second law eternal is the law of nature.

⁵⁴Richard Hooker, "Preface to them that seek The Reform of the Laws and Orders Ecclesiastical in the Church of England," in Of The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, ed., Christopher Morris (London, 1954), I, 94.

⁵⁵Shirley, 60.

⁵⁶In general, Hooker was in essential agreement with St. Thomas Aquinas on the division of law, the basic concepts of reason, and the acquisition of knowledge.

⁵⁷Morris, Book I, I, 150.

⁵⁸Ibid., 154. Hooker never capitalized pronouns referring to God.

Everything which works as it should, and was intended to work, conforms to this law. The heavens and elements of the world obey it unwittingly because it is their destiny to do so. Angels observe it as a celestial law; human beings as voluntary and conscious agents.

The law of human nature (or what Hooker called the law of reason) is actually that participation which thinking creatures have in God's eternal ordinance by virtue of their reason.⁵⁹ It is that which binds "creatures reasonable in this world and with which by reason they may most plainly perceive themselves bound."⁶⁰ When once the soul of man comprehends anything above "differences of time, affirmations, negations and contradictions in speech," it has attained the use of this reason.⁶¹ Everything connected with nature is amenable to reason, since that faculty is competent to deal with all problems arising out of natural life.⁶² The dictates and workings of reason vary according to the scale of nature, and the forms and ranks of custom which make

⁵⁹ Shirley, 77.

⁶⁰ Morris, Book I, I, 154-155.

⁶¹ Ibid., 167.

⁶² Viewed in this perspective, reason is able to do more than infer conclusions from premises. It is able, in a sense, to invent the premises themselves. J. W. Allen, A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century (London, 1928), 239-241, concludes that Hooker placed too much emphasis on human reason, ascribing an exaggerated perfection to the rational faculty. He was the only secondary authority used who came to this conclusion.

up the eternal order.

What obliges human beings but is known only by special revelation from God is termed divine or supernatural law. It reveals not only what is beyond reason, but also sets its divine seal on many truths discovered by reason and on various duties to which conscience bears witness. Human law, having its origin either in reason or God's ordinances, is made binding by virtue of necessity or expediency.⁶³ Such directives are nothing but the rational application to concrete and sometimes varying conditions of the general principles of natural law.⁶⁴ To Hooker, then, law is that which reason defines to be good and which, therefore, must be done. Law compels obedience because it is the command of reason.

There is harmony and unity of all law as an expression of one Supreme Will. The two realms of nature and supernature co-exist in perfect syntony because in the last analysis they both flow from God's lex aeterna. The ultimate source of law being found in the eternal mind of God, no one can make a law without having received the authorization of the Creator, directly or indirectly.

While law is an expression of will, it is not the dictate of

⁶³Morris, Book I, I, 155.

⁶⁴Munz, 54.

arbitrary will, and God is not a tyrant ruling by caprice, but a Will freely accepting reason as its rule. That which makes law to be what it is, is reason. This order: reason, will, and law, places ordinance on an independent basis.⁶⁵

Among creatures in this world, only man's observance of the law of his nature "is Righteousness; only Man's transgression Sin."⁶⁶ It is accordingly important to discover how satisfactorily man is equipped to make decisions. Although angels already have a full and complete knowledge in the highest degree that can be imparted to them, men are at first without understanding or knowledge. Nevertheless, from this vacuity they grow by stages until they arrive at creditable and often amazing intellectual heights. For many years a human being's development consists in the amassing of sense-experience upon which reason is brought to bear, and later, the right helps of the arts and learning. Education and reason not only prepare man to distinguish between truth and error, but also between good and evil.⁶⁷

Apprehension of the good does not lead to action unless the will is quickened. Man must desire the good; there must be an act of will. In this process the will is influenced by reason.

⁶⁵The Puritans bound all law to the Bible.

⁶⁶Morris, Book I, I, 186.

⁶⁷Ibid., 166-169.

There are different degrees of goodness in the good deeds of human beings, and a corresponding difference in the manner of God's sanction and approval of them. All moral actions of man are either good or evil. If there were not this difference, one man could not excel over another. There are still other actions which do not come within the sphere of goodness, but which nevertheless please God, such as gratitude, natural affection, and acts of heroism.

Since evil as evil cannot be desired, if that which is fancied is intrinsically wrong "the cause is the goodness which is or seemeth to be joined with it."⁶⁸ Reason, on the other hand, may rightly discern the thing which is good and yet the will of man rejects it. Habit and prejudice militate against reason. In sinning, one prefers a lesser good before a greater good, knowingly and willingly. If man chooses evil, he is not excused, for "the main principles of Reason are in themselves apparent."⁶⁹ These principles, furthermore, are not always abstract, but may be drawn from historical growth also. Goodness can be discerned in two ways, by causes or by signs. Hooker deemed the former too difficult for "this present age full of tongue and weak of brain," so he concentrated on the latter.⁷⁰ The general acceptance of

⁶⁸Ibid., 172.

⁶⁹Ibid., 177.

⁷⁰Ibid., 175. He was referring here to the English humanists.

truth is a sign of its divine nature, and knowledge of all kinds is the foundation upon which man bases his judgment and extracts his principles of action. If all men hold a course or concept to be true or good they must have learned it from nature (the law of reason) and nature is but God's instrument. Certain truths which are discovered by the light of reason (with which God endowed everyone) are imposed upon the will. These include the concept of God, man's dependence upon Him, necessity of seeking His aid in prayer, and the duty of creatures to worship their Creator.⁷¹ Lastly, a law generally accepted is a sign of its goodness of operation.

Although the law of reason does not contain all precepts thinking creatures are bound to observe, it does contain those duties which all men "by force of natural wit either do or might understand to be such duties as concern all men."⁷² If right is so easily discernable, why were many men ignorant of their moral duties? They simply would "not bend their wits" to examine whether their actions were good or evil, Hooker explained.⁷³ Man had by this moral law of reason, intuitions and understandings upon which he could deduce principles relative to right and wrong.

⁷¹Davies, 50.

⁷²Morris, Book I, I, 183.

⁷³Ibid., 184.

He was answerable to God for breaches of this law.

Man is furthermore so constituted, that if he possessed all known beauties, riches, honors, virtues, learning, and perfections, he would remain unsatisfied; because these are desired as means to further ends. But there is a final end desired for nothing but itself, and with infinite strength -- the Beatific Vision. A human being is completely happy only when fully united with God. Acquisition of the knowledge of God is a most complicated process. Under one aspect it is a private judgment one seeks through his own reason and conscience under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Socially, one is led to a comprehension of God by the authority of mankind whether in a secular or spiritual society.

A certain degree of blessedness is given to man by nature. He desires his sovereign Good (God), and the ideal of everlasting happiness, naturally. By the light of reason he is persuaded to perform the duties and works of righteousness. The way to salvation, however, (faith, hope, and charity) is a mystery unveiled by God, and only in Heaven can complete joy be apprehended. God has revealed "from heaven a law to teach him [man] how that which is desired naturally must now supernaturally be attained."⁷⁴

Scripture contains this knowledge necessary for salvation. To have God's law written is a great help in determining

⁷⁴Ibid., 212.

or distinguishing essentials from traditions,⁷⁵ for tradition does not require the "same obedience and reverence" as God's written law.⁷⁶ God's "surceasing to speak to the world since the publishing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the delivery of the same in writing is unto us a manifest token that the way of salvation is now sufficiently opened."⁷⁷ Yet, God's law in Scripture is not concerned exclusively with the way of salvation. The Bible comprehends all laws of nature and reason, and thus enforces natural laws.

Every law contained in Scripture does not, however, oblige human beings.⁷⁸ Men are bound by some ordinances forever; others require only transitory obedience. It is the matter and not the author that decides mutability. Obviously, the first eternal law and the law of nature or reason, are unalterable, because they perpetually comprehend the very essence of order, law, obligation, and nature. "Laws natural do always bind; laws positive not

⁷⁵Shirley, 86.

⁷⁶Morris, Book I, I, 213. This was not a total rejection of belief in tradition for which Hooker had great respect; but only insofar as the doctrine of salvation was concerned. The Scriptures lacked no revealed truths necessary for salvation.

⁷⁷Ibid., 217.

⁷⁸For example, among the laws given by God to the Jews, those of a moral nature are still binding because their end and aptness still abide. The Jewish ceremonial laws and the punishment of certain crimes by quadruple restitution, imposed for particular occasions, are mutable.

so."⁷⁹ Human and divine laws, being positive, are thus susceptible to alteration according to the matter and end for which they were made. All divine laws affecting man in his supernatural capacity, and revealing to him the way of salvation are unchangeable. The Gospel teachings of Christ, for example, are immutable because they bid man to obey such duties as could not be determined without revelation and prescribe to the Church the kind of service God requires.

Those laws controlling man in his civil and ecclesiastical life are permanent or alterable depending upon their origin. If the end for which they provide is perpetually necessary, and the way whereby they provide is perpetually most apt, those laws should remain unchanged. Otherwise they are mutable.⁸⁰

Thus, Hooker removed the laws of ecclesiastical and civil polity from the control of a rigid appeal to the Bible and conceived them in terms of historical convenience and development. They were by "nature subject to change and capable of progressive transformation."⁸¹

Throughout the development of his theory of law, Hooker laid such obvious stress on reason, that the temptation is to term him

⁷⁹Ibid., 220.

⁸⁰Ibid., 219-221.

⁸¹D'Entrèves, 125.

a "rationalist."⁸² It is true that he was firmly convinced that human nature was essentially rational, but he was no Deist of the seventeenth or eighteenth century variety.⁸³ In stressing reason, Hooker was marshalling a philosophical argument against the Puritans. Their emphasis on the corruption of human nature and absolute sovereignty of God led to a new concept of a standard of justice. Their ideology of accepting the Scriptures as the exclusive source of all truths men needed to know would have swept away the whole mass of tradition, doctrine, and ordinance upon which the Church of England rested.⁸⁴ Depraved human nature could only be regenerated through a special act of divine grace. Faith had to supplant reason and divine law was to be substituted for natural law.

Since all Puritan errors proceeded from their erroneous notion of the hierarchy of laws, Hooker's return to the idea of natural law, interrupted by the teachings of the continental reformers, stressed again the harmony of nature and supernature, and evidenced a deep affinity with the traditional ideas of medieval thought.

Hooker's rationalism, as inferred from his theory of law,

⁸²To the Puritans Hooker was a rationalist, because for them Scripture contained all truths they needed to know. The purpose of reason was only to read the Bible and understand it.

⁸³Dirksen, 79.

⁸⁴This was true of the continental reformers in general.

introduced the concept of reason into the essence of God's nature. It was this very belief which helped to bridge the gulf between man's limitations and God's infinity. And although the concept of man's reason alone being capable of deducing the law of nature meant that individual reason was a sufficient standard of action, such rationalism was neutralized by certain important factors in Hooker's thought.

First, Hooker did not deny revelation, admitting its absolute necessity in fathoming the ways of God and attaining salvation.⁸⁵ Second, man should make use of his rational powers to control his affections and appetites. Man's will, too, was a valuable help in his spiritual quest.⁸⁶ Third, the law of nature was part of the eternal order which God imposed upon creation. Reason was not a faculty which existed and functioned independently of the Creator, but an integral step in the Lord's divine plan for man.⁸⁷ Human beings could learn much about the will of God by using their reason. Fourth, Hooker, retaining a profound regard for what had been traditionally held and accepted, demanded that rational construction stand the test of history, and not contradict it, or tradition.

⁸⁵Morris, Book I, I, 208.

⁸⁶Davies, 54.

⁸⁷Morris, Book I, I, 176.

Hooker thus laid bare Puritan inconsistencies and errors. He had shown that law was something more than sets of precepts or rules. Law fulfilled an essential function by being a connection between God and man, and from man to God. All true law was derived from the Creator, and by reason, much of it was apprehended. There was a hierarchy of law leading down from God to His creatures, and all in perfect concord. In men there were natural, rational, supernatural, political, and ecclesiastical operations, each to be measured by its own proper law. Scriptural ordinance was just one part of this remarkable order. There was, further, provision for change in both divine and human positive precepts.

Hooker rendered a great service when he based his theology and political philosophy partly on the law of nature and so re-introduced that great concept into English thought from which under Puritan influences it "must have been expelled."⁸⁸ He significantly picked up the broken threads of medieval thought and joined them to the ideological progression of his contemporary world, believing this to be consistent with the mind and will of God, and the structure of English society. But most of all, the Puritan controversy notwithstanding, Richard Hooker had laid the philosophical foundations for a theory and system of Anglicanism.

⁸⁸Davies, 58.

CHAPTER III

AUTHORITY

Richard Hooker's concept of authority can be best understood when viewed in the perspective of the Puritan problem. Since the Puritans equated authority with Scripture, Hooker deemed it imperative to prove that wisdom and directives were not the exclusive province of the Sacred Word.

He detected two fundamental errors in such assertions. First, the failure to see that many actions were framed according to the law of reason, and accurately so. Second, the mistake of demanding Scriptural approbation for such lowly actions as "taking up a straw," when Biblical sanction should be confined within the compass of moral actions.⁸⁹

The first fallacy Hooker refuted as follows: Scripture is not the only rule of human action. It is not the intent, scope, and purpose of the Bible to comprise all things which man may perform and believe. Wisdom is diverse in kind and instruction, teaching sometimes through Scripture, but also through nature and reason. If mankind were to reject all knowledge not contained in

⁸⁹Morris, Book II, I, 235. By moral actions Hooker meant those having "vice or virtue in them."

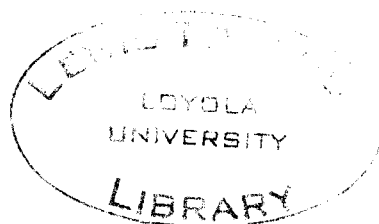
the Bible, the accumulated wisdom of the ages comprehended in the arts and sciences would be eliminated.⁹⁰

To give credence to man's authority, which merely means the force which a human being's "word hath for the assurance of another's mind that buildeth upon it," does not detract from God's glory.⁹¹ The weightiest affairs in the world depend upon such testimony. Court proceedings are grounded on this. The decisions and conclusions of wise and expert men are sought in matters of opinion and judgment. Teaching and the professions of medicine and law depend upon human determination. Even those (Puritans) who protest against human authority, when the judgment of learned men are arrayed against them, either point to their own verdicts or else the decisions of others in support of their beliefs.

Now, if the natural potentialities of man's wit by experience and study can attain such fruition in human affairs, it is not unlikely that in divine matters assisted by the aids in Scripture, the grace of God, and diligence, man's intellect can reach great heights in the knowledge of faith and religion. It is, of course, not impossible for man to be deceived, and the proof in matters of worship derived from the authority of a human being's judgment is not able to work the absolute assurance of God Himself. In

⁹⁰Ibid., 246.

⁹¹Ibid., 265.



questions of doctrine, however, when no contrary infallible Scriptural evidence is offered, the resolution of the most learned divines in the world is most likely to be accepted by reasonable men as accurate.

In fact, the "very key which openeth the door of entrance into the knowledge of the Scripture" is the authority of man.⁹² Hooker insisted on the place of human reason in the right use of the Scripture.⁹³ The Bible could not teach us the things that are of God unless "we did credit men who have taught us that the words of Scripture do signify those things."⁹⁴ No science discloses the first principles upon which it is based. These postulates are always assumed as self-evident or as previously granted. So with the Bible. Although the Holy Word expounds revealed supernatural truths that the intellect by itself cannot fathom, reason tells man that Scripture contains God's Word, and that it is sacred and divine.⁹⁵

Reason, in fact, plays a major role in understanding religion. The Prophets and Apostles, themselves, took great pains in gathering natural arguments. By the wise use of the reasoning faculty, the Ancient Fathers detected errors in heresies;

⁹²Ibid., 267.

⁹³Hughes, III, 220.

⁹⁴Morris, Book II, I, 267.

⁹⁵Ibid., Book III, I, 319.

infidels and godless persons were converted; believers were strengthened in their faith; and laws for church guidance (which are not contained in the Bible as absolute doctrine) were judged necessary. The Fathers considered it unlawful for men to urge as supernaturally revealed truth taught by God, any beliefs not contained in Scripture. More than this must not be read into them. No sound Anglican clergyman has ever denied that the will of God by which men are to judge their actions, is partly manifested by reason, and not by Scripture alone. Reason's purpose is not to supplement defects in God's Word. Rather it is a required instrument enabling human beings to reap the fruit and benefit of Scripture. Tradition here, serves as confirmation by universal consent of mankind of what is knowable by reason.⁹⁶

"... an opinion hath spread itself very far in the world, as if the way to be ripe in faith were to be raw in wit and judgment," Hooker quipped.⁹⁷ Intellect is not an enemy to religion. It is an aid. Pious men not equipped with sharp reason, the wisdom of the early Fathers and other learned men; but only with their own personal divine inspiration, are not satisfactory interpreters of the Sacred Text.⁹⁸ The role of the church enters

⁹⁶Dirksen, 66.

⁹⁷Morris, Book III, I, 311.

⁹⁸By divine personal inspiration, Hooker meant private judgment.

here, for one of the first lessons which reflection teaches human beings, is the right of that institution to bear witness to the meaning of Scripture. ". . . a man whose capacity will scarce serve him to utter five words in sensible manner blusheth not . . . to think his own bare Yea as good as the Nay of all the wise, grave, and learned judgments that are in the world."⁹⁹ Hooker saw clearly that the Puritan theory of the utter depravity of human nature logically led not only to the disparagement of human reason, but also to interpretation of the Bible by divine inspiration.¹⁰⁰

The second fundamental error of Puritan ideology -- that whatever man does must have the sanction of Scripture -- Hooker dismissed as absurd. If a course of action is not absolutely forbidden by the Bible one may or may not follow it.¹⁰¹ Indifferent matters are left free and arbitrary, but it is not their express signification in Scripture that makes them indifferent, but rather their omission. When food and clothing, for example, are placed before man, he is not obliged to match his choice with a directive in the Bible, for there is none. Surely this is not sin. No divine sanction for all activities obviously concerned with the

⁹⁹Ibid., Book II, I, 273.

¹⁰⁰Munz, 32.

¹⁰¹Morris, Book II, I, 239.

maintenance of temporal life is necessary. To be lawful a choice does not have to be commended by God in express terms. Faith may not be so narrowly construed as if it extended no further than the Scriptures. We believe both by faith and sense or reason.

Man furthermore does not sin when he does not consciously perform every natural or moral action for the glory of God.¹⁰² God may be glorified by a general good intention, and obedience to, and performance of His Will, is revealed not only in Scripture, but through other laws as well.

God approves more than He commands, and His precepts comprehended in the law of nature, since they may be known by other means than the Bible, must be acceptable in His sight. Some good actions of men (e.g. faith) are necessary for salvation, and our primary source of the knowledge of these is God's Word. Other actions, however, although not required to be saved, are of such dignity and acceptance with God that "most ample reward in heaven is laid up for them."¹⁰³

The doctrine teaching men to do nothing except what is approved by Scripture would indeed bring confusion into the lives of human beings, upon whom necessities urge the use of reason, common discretion, and judgment. Make all things sin which men do by nature without biblical approbation "and parents shall

¹⁰²Ibid., 238.

¹⁰³Ibid., 277. He probably meant good works here, because it was part of his theology that good works were rewarded, although of themselves they had no meritorious or satisfying power.

cause their children to sin as oft as they cause them to do anything before they come to years of capacity and be ripe for knowledge in the Scripture."¹⁰⁴ This confusion would not end in man's personal affairs, but would bring chaos into his spiritual and social life as well.

It is precisely in the sphere of indifferent things which God neither commands nor forbids, that lawful human authority has its powers.¹⁰⁵ Setting up Scripture as the sole and sufficient rule of life is disguised arrogance, opposing its own wisdom to Divine Wisdom, manifested alike in human reason and revelation.

Hooker believed that in attributing to the Bible more than it contained, an eventual loss of its esteem would ensue, and he also had the insight to foresee that logically applied, the Puritan concept of jus divinum meant the ultimate overthrow of all law not directly reducible to Scripture. Since Hooker's theory of the mutability of laws applied to all positive law, divine as well as human, he supported an historical interpretation of the jus divinum.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 281.

¹⁰⁵D'Entrèves, 124.

CHAPTER IV

THEOLOGY

Although the Ecclesiastical Polity was not intended to be a doctrinal dissertation, from it and certain extant sermons it is possible to construct an abstract of Richard Hooker's theology as a part of his total theory of Anglicanism. Religion was to Hooker the "stay of states." It was the highest of all cares appertaining to the public regiment.¹⁰⁶ All duties done with it in mind were best performed. More spiritually, the function of the religious faculty was to order, nourish, and strengthen the whole life and being of man for the loving service of God, and happiness of communion with Him.¹⁰⁷

The solemn duties of public service to be rendered to God, Hooker explained, are executed in churches. As their end is the communal worship of God, they are houses of great dignity. By sparing no expense in establishing and furnishing a place for Him, we give God a testimony of our love and devotion. He nowhere revealed "that it is his delight to dwell beggarly."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶Morris, Book V, II, 12-14.

¹⁰⁷Paget, 127.

¹⁰⁸Morris, Book V, II, 43.

Instruction in God's saving truth is necessary to attain eternal life. His truth is one; the means of spreading it, diverse. This may take the form of public or private teaching, orally or in print. In fact, the English Church makes use of all fitting means to explain and reveal the Word of God: preaching, catechizing, the reading of Canonical Scripture, the apocryphal books, and homilies.

". . . the name of prayer [is] usual to signify even all the service that ever we do unto God."¹⁰⁹ Prayer is a work common to the church triumphant as well as to the church militant. It concerns men privately and as members of the church. The good that men do by public prayer is more than can be done individually, for besides a personal benefit thereby derived, the whole congregation is bettered, favors are approved as needful and good in the judgment of all, and the zeal and devotion of others serves as inspiration.¹¹⁰

The true relation between prayer and faith is that desires voiced in prayer are the requests of a mind that believes in God and asks nothing that is unseemly or selfish. The prayers of the just are always accepted but God does not always grant their petitions.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 106.

¹¹⁰Ibid., 106-109.

Ceremonies are important in the religious life of man. In every main public duty which God requires, there is besides the essential matter and form a certain outward fashion whereby such duties are decently administered. Speech and abstractions are not sufficient to edify man. Since he is a creature composed of body and soul, an appeal must also be made to his senses. Ceremonies, however, since they are ways and means to an end, are flexible. Many practices of the early church, e.g., the use of common rivers for baptism, administering the Eucharist after meat, and so forth, are unfit for the present. The church's discretion here may correctly alter such customs. Even to add to a sacrament certain rites and ceremonies is not to alter its essence, for the end must always remain the same, but the means admit change.¹¹¹

All ritual symbolizes something, thereby aiding man in his understanding of religious doctrine.¹¹² The charge is made that the English Church conforms too closely to "popish" ceremonies. Merely because Rome retains similar practices is no reason to reject them as unworthy. The Church of England accepts such rites because they have the approbation of long-standing tradition and are the best means to a desired end. Services held in common are not such as belong to particular sects, but are rather the ancient

¹¹¹Ibid., Book IV, I, 360-366.

¹¹²Barry, 39.

customs of the Church of Christ "whereof ourselves being a part, we have the selfsame interest in them which our fathers before us had, from whom the same are descended unto us."¹¹³ The Anglicans have their own right to all that is Catholic and historic.¹¹⁴

From these preliminaries Hooker was led to a discussion of sacraments. He based his whole sacramental system on the doctrine of the Incarnation and the general indwelling of Christ, for "the Sacraments do serve to make us partakers of Christ."¹¹⁵ Just what this union with Christ signified, caused Hooker to review the meaning of the Trinity, Christ's Incarnation, and the personal Presence of the Deity in man.

In every Person of the Blessed Trinity there is implied both the substance of God which is one, and also that property which actually causes the same Person to differ from the other Two.¹¹⁶ "The Father alone is originally the Deitie which Christ originally is not."¹¹⁷ This does not make the Son inferior, for by the gift of eternal generation, Christ has received one and the self-same

¹¹³Morris, Book IV, I, 388.

¹¹⁴Paget, 121. Romanish practices in the English Church abhorred by the Puritans included a prescript form of prayer, the observing of festival days to give special honor and thanksgiving to God, the marriage ceremony and attending customs, and the rites of burial.

¹¹⁵Morris, Book V, II, 201.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 202.

¹¹⁷Covel, 16.

substance of the Father. The Deity of the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, though not literally expressed in Scripture, can be proved by Scripture. The Persons of the Godhead are all one God in number, one indivisible essence or substance, so that their distinction cannot possibly admit separation. They remain eternally indivisible. "The Father is one, the Sonne another, the Holy Ghost another, but not another thing. For that thing that they all are is this one thing, that they are one God."¹¹⁸ Whatever One works, the other Persons "are jointly and equally" initiating.¹¹⁹

The Incarnation may be granted to only one Person, but not denied to that nature which is common to all three. The world's salvation without the Incarnation was impossible, and without taking human nature Christ could not suffer for the sins of mankind. Whatever is natural to the Deity remains in Christ uncommunicated to His human nature, and what is natural to His manhood is apart from His divinity. Through the union of both natures, however, there has not incurred the damage or loss of either. There is often a coöperation of both natures but never an infusing of the properties of the one into the other.¹²⁰

Men although called the sons of God are designated so only by

¹¹⁸Ibid., 22.

¹¹⁹Morris, Book V, II, 227.

¹²⁰Ibid., 203-212.

grace and favor. We are in God through Christ eternally according to that intent and purpose whereby we were chosen to be made His from all eternity and were present in Him through knowledge and love. Our being in Christ by foreknowledge is not sufficient for salvation without securing real adoption into the fellowship of saints in this world -- the invisible church. Then we are actually in Him.

There are degrees of man's participation in Christ, for while all in a certain sense share in Him as Creator of the world, all do not participate in Him as their Savior, and even these "do not . . . all equally show forth in holiness of life the fullness of His indwelling."¹²¹ Since Christ is whole and indivisible, these degrees of union can be traced only to the graces, fewer or more, which men receive from Him.

Hooker recognized only two sacraments, baptism and the Eucharist, but he attributed to them the power of saving grace. Sacraments are those signs and tokens of some general promised grace which descend from God into the soul which receives them.¹²² They are the divinely appointed means of the union of the soul with God which is the supernatural life of man, and not "bare resemblances or memorials of things absent."¹²³ Grace is a

¹²¹ Paget, 160.

¹²² Morris, Book IV, I, 363.

¹²³ Ibid., Book V, II, 236.

sacrament's true essential form; elements (e.g., water in baptism), its matter. Several prerequisites are required of sacraments. Christ must be the author. All men are bound to receive them. They must carry a promise from God effecting saving grace in the person of the receiver. A visible sign must represent the grace wrought, and the sacrament's institution must be clearly apparent in Holy Scripture, because sacraments are supernatural truths which cannot otherwise be demonstrated.¹²⁴

The sacraments' chief force consists not in their being heavenly ceremonies which God has sanctified and ordained to be administered in His church, but rather as marks whereby man knows when God imparts the saving grace of Christ, and as a conditional means God requires in them to whom He gives grace. Sacraments serve as bonds of obedience to God, provocations to godliness, preservations from sin, and memorials of the principal benefits of Christ. They are necessary to supernatural life, not because they contain in themselves a vital force or efficacy, but because they are moral instruments of salvation. God works invisibly; but that men be enabled to notice His glorious Presence, He gives them "some plain and sensible token whereby to know what they cannot see."¹²⁵ Sacraments of themselves without God are ineffectual.

¹²⁴Ibid., "Fragments of an Answer to the Letter of Certain English Protestants," II, 503.

¹²⁵Ibid., Book V, II, 235.

The church has no originating power here.

All who receive the sacraments do not necessarily receive grace, for unless man performs the "duties of service and worship . . . as the Author of grace requireth," sacraments are unprofitable.¹²⁶

While the grace necessary for salvation was connected with the sacraments, Hooker stated that "grace is not absolutely tied" to them, apparently meaning that certain graces (perhaps a type of actual grace) were derived from the general indwelling of Christ in men, attending church services, spiritual reading, and the like.¹²⁷ Hooker also recognized diminution and augmentation of graces.

Baptism is a sacrament instituted by God in His church to incorporate those who receive it into Christ. Through the merits of the Son of God, the saving grace of imputation takes away original sin and makes one a real Christian and a member of God's church. Although baptism is an absolute necessity to remove original sin, and is to be administered by certain rites and prayers there are exceptions. Infants who die before this sacrament can be administered are not condemned, and lay baptism even by women is permitted in cases of necessity.¹²⁸

¹²⁶Ibid., 236.

¹²⁷Ibid., 248.

¹²⁸Ibid., 245-259.

The grace received by the reception of the Holy Eucharist continues man's supernatural life begun with the reception of baptism. The fruit of the Eucharist is participation in the Body and Blood of Christ. This sacrament is required for those who desire to "live the life of God."¹²⁹ Holy Communion, however, can be withheld from those leading evil lives, those who have wronged their neighbors, and parties among whom there is open hatred and malice.¹³⁰

Hooker regretted the varying opinions held on the subject of the Eucharist, because he concluded that all schools of thought agreed concerning that which alone was material -- a real participation.¹³¹ To Hooker the Body and Blood of Christ is not present in the consecrated elements, but is merely communicated to the souls of the recipients. ". . . the grace of the Eucharist . . . [is not] in the Eucharist before it can be in us that receive it."¹³² By this sacrament we share in Him and should concentrate on His Presence. Arguments whether there was an incorporation of Christ in the elements (consubstantiation), or an actual change

¹²⁹Ibid., 319.

¹³⁰Keble, Book VI, III, 51.

¹³¹Ernest C. Messenger, The Reformation The Mass and The Priesthood (London, 1937), II, 316. Hooker used the term "participation" very loosely.

¹³²Morris, Book V, II, 323.

from the substances of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ (transubstantiation), were pedantic.¹³³

An important part of any doctrinal theory is the subject of sin and justification. There is nowhere in Hooker's writings a systematic discussion of original sin, yet by inference he cannot have understood, like Calvin, a total and irreparable depravity of human nature, for he was much too emphatic about the inherent goodness of natural man and his capacity for right action. Hooker's whole system of natural laws was dependent upon the innate power of human nature to do good by its own natural force. As for actual sin, although no man is completely without it, many manage to avoid grievous offences through prayers and the performance of their duties of worship. Men must pray and hope to be preserved from "any and every special sin."¹³⁴

On the topic of justification, the great Anglican was verbose. Man's justification takes place by imputation of the merits of Jesus Christ; it is not an inherent quality. "Righteousness . . . is not our own; therefore we cannot be justified by any innate quality."¹³⁵ Christ by becoming Man secured our redemption and purchased our salvation. Man is saved by faith in Christ's merits

¹³³Such a view, in addition to Hooker's assertion that sacrifice is no longer a part of church ministry, has led authorities to consider Hooker little more than a Sacramentarian or Zwinglian in this phase of his theology.

¹³⁴Covel, 55.

¹³⁵Morris, "A Learned Discourse of Justification, Works, and How the Foundation of Faith is Overthrown," I, 21.

and promises. Faith justifies; justification washes away sin; sin removed, man is clothed with the "righteousness which is of God."¹³⁶ Only through this process are humans made worthy.

Because the English Church teaches that faith alone justifies, hope and charity are not thereby excluded, but are joined as inseparable mates or qualities with faith in the man that is justified; and are in fact required of him. Anglicans did not believe "Christ alone excluding . . . faith, . . . [or even] Christ alone excluding our good works . . . unto salvation."¹³⁷ Man, thus, because of his faith performs good works, and although such actions do not serve to justify, they are both acceptable and rewardable. No sound member of the English Church would deny that willing poverty, humble obedience, and true charity were extremely admirable and advantageous in attaining perfection in Christian life. The difference between faith and good works can be seen in action taken toward precepts and counsels. The former being observed, e.g., thou shall not kill, is rewarded if obeyed, and punished if transgressed; the latter, e.g., works of charity, if not observed, are not punished, but if heeded have a greater reward, because they are not demanded.¹³⁸

To say, these facts notwithstanding, that good works are

¹³⁶Keble, "Sermon II Upon St. Jude's Epistle," III, 694.

¹³⁷Morris, "Learned Discourse," I, 59.

¹³⁸Covel, 46-52.

necessary for salvation is false, for they have no power of satisfying God for sin and no virtue to merit both grace here and glory in heaven.¹³⁹ The best things men do have something in them unworthy, and if a human being were to eliminate from his charitable acts those done to please men, suit himself, or to obtain personal recognition, what real merit is left! God in His goodness rewards these efforts and is pleased with our intentions. No more can be claimed for them.

Christ, furthermore, justifies the man of faith not for the worthiness of personal belief, but for the worthiness of what is believed in, for the source of faith itself is grace. Although man be sinful, if he believes in Christ, and hates his transgressions, God will cancel his sins by not imputing them and take away all corresponding punishment.

What assurance does man have that he is justified? "It is as easy a matter for the spirit within you to tell whose ye are, as for the eyes of your body to judge where you sit or in what place you stand."¹⁴⁰ If the Spirit has been effectual in one's regeneration, he will lead a godly life, practicing faith, hope, and charity.

Allied to this doctrine was Hooker's conception of

¹³⁹Morris, "Learned Discourse," I, 61.

¹⁴⁰Keble, "Sermon I Upon St. Jude's Epistle," III, 673.

predestination. There is a general inclination of God towards all men's everlasting happiness, notwithstanding sin. This natural love of God towards mankind was the cause of appointing Christ to suffer for the sins of the whole world. Christ's sacrifice for our transgressions was motivated by a merciful desire that no man perish. God, nevertheless finds just occasion to decree the condemnation of some men, but the cause of their damnation lies wholly in themselves. It is contrary to the justice of God to "condemn . . . or in purpose to determine condemnation without a cause."¹⁴¹ There are many in all ages who have made themselves "incapable" of the grace necessary for salvation.¹⁴² They have resisted the Holy Spirit, thereby pronouncing themselves unworthy of everlasting life and of all effectual helps thereunto belonging. The cause why "that Spirit which softeneth others forsaketh them is their own malice."¹⁴³ Predestination in sinful man does not imply the granting of a nature other than the one the Creator first gave, but rather the bestowing of gifts to eliminate those impediments which grow into nature through sin. Human beings by nature have a freedom of operation, but the ability of virtuous operation presupposes grace.

¹⁴¹Ibid., "A Learned Sermon on the Nature of Pride," III, 629.

¹⁴²Morris, "Fragments of an Answer to Certain English Protestants," II, 537.

¹⁴³Ibid., 538.

In this sense only, then, can it be said that God predestined certain men to Hell: the cause moving Him was not His omniscience or His foresight of virtue in any man, but rather the sins of the condemned to whom His saving mercy does not extend. When man sins he alone is to blame. Reason if diligent enough, is able to determine the good. We must impute our ignorance "to our own slough [sic]: we suffer the gifts of God to rust."¹⁴⁴ To God's foreknown elect (whose numbers are known only to Him) continuance of grace is given, deservedly. No man's salvation is possible without grace, yet this aid is "not given us to abandon labor."¹⁴⁵ Man must work unceasingly.

The "Roman" doctrine of purgatory, Hooker dismissed as an abridgement of God's mercy toward sinners. It implied that however merciful the Lord be in remitting, pardoning, and forgiving all transgressions, nevertheless His corrective justice is unappeased until sinners either in this world or in the next have endured vexation proportionate to the pleasure they have received in doing evil. Until then, there is no possible rest for their souls. It was a fearful torment to the mind to be forced to accept this doctrine. Christ's redemption pardoned and acquitted forever all pain and punishment which man's offences might deserve. When a

¹⁴⁴Ibid., 495.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 501. Although Hooker believed man must labor through hope and charity as well as faith, he never clearly explained how these efforts were rewarded.

human being sins after baptism, he is not doomed. God promises to those who go astray full remission of all their sins if they be penitent. The chastisement for such "after-offences" are sufficiently paid for by the merits of Christ.

Obviously, this theory is allied to the problem of repentance. The dignity of a virtue is the most Hooker would ascribe to this whole system. Penitency is a private duty toward God and also an obligation of external discipline. Man's reconciliation with God is an inward secret repentance of the heart, unless something in the quality of the sin requires more.¹⁴⁶ Penitency includes an aversion of the will from sin, submission of one's self to God by supplication and prayer, and a "purpose of a new life, testified with present works of amendment."¹⁴⁷

The first of these, also known as contrition, ends in an abhorrence of sin.

The second corresponds to confession. In the Church of England there are public prayers to God in which all declare themselves guilty and the minister accordingly dissolves these transgressions. Private confessions to the minister and absolution by him is publicly taught and professed, yet the safest way is to

¹⁴⁶He was probably referring to restitution.

¹⁴⁷Keble, Book VI, III, 11.

refer men's hidden crimes to God alone.¹⁴⁸ But lest carelessness of general confession extinguish all remorse of men's particularly enormous crimes, the clergy solemnly give their faithful a very fearful admonition that only the worthy are to receive the Holy Eucharist.

The third involves satisfaction. Repentance denotes the habit and operation of a certain grace or virtue in man; satisfaction, the effect which it has either with God or man. The latter simply means, "whatsoever a penitent should do in humbling himself unto God, and testifying by deeds of contrition the same which confession in words pretendeth."¹⁴⁹ It is a work which justice requires, but is not, of course, meritorious, in the sense that it remits sin. Yet, God does desire us to acknowledge thankfully the benefit of Christ's merits, and therefore our works of penitence are neither needless nor fruitless. They please and pacify God who would not require them if they were inane. Prayers, fasts, and almsgiving are among the most respected of these works. Prayer is a token of piety which is directed toward God. Fasting is a pledge of moderation and sobriety in an individual's character. Almsgiving is a testimony of one's intent to do good toward his fellow-men.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., 49-50.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., 55.

The absolution of penitents Hooker deemed important enough to explain thoroughly. Sin involves three aspects. First is the act which passes away and vanishes. This act God alone can remit. Second, is the resultant pollution in the defiled soul. God washes this stain with sanctifying grace. Third, is the punishment charged to the sinner. Again, none but the Lord has the power "to cast body and soul into hell-fire," or to grant full remission.¹⁵⁰ These truths granted, the minister has the authority to forgive sin, but only with certain restraints. All sin is not unpardonable which does not have the cleric's absolution. "We labor to instruct men in such sort, that every soul which is wounded with sin may learn the way how to cure itself."¹⁵¹ Furthermore, absolution does not really take away sin, but only assures man of God's merciful amnesty. For the remission of sins two conditions are necessary: grace as the only means of combating iniquity, and repentance as a duty required in men.

Hooker was deeply puzzled because the Fathers of the Church so admired this needless office of confessor. He was sure that the remission of sin proceeded only from God, following upon the virtue of true repentance appearing in man. Considering Hooker's concept of the ministry, such a viewpoint is not surprising.

Richard Hooker's theology was a composite of doctrine and

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 85.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 74.

belief garnered from many sources -- the early Fathers of the Catholic Church, continental reformers, English articles of faith, and his own conviction; yet in contrast to his fundamentally Catholic philosophical principles, Hooker's theology was essentially Protestant.

CHAPTER V

CHURCH AND ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY

Compared with Richard Hooker's brilliant interpretation of law and authority, students find his theory of the church and ecclesiastical polity a disappointing breach in logic and insight. Any evaluation of this phase of his ideology, however, must be based on the understanding that Hooker was an Elizabethan divine writing in defense of a contemporary system.

According to his rationalizations, there is a visible and an invisible church. The latter is Christ's "body mystical." It cannot be sensibly discerned by any man, and its members are known only to God.¹⁵² This is the church of salvation -- the true church, purely internal and motivated by an interior faith, distinctively supernatural and purely spiritual. There is no sign knowable to man that he is a member except his own conviction.

The visible church, termed the Church of Christ, is entirely external and consists essentially of duties toward God. As a social organization, it is divided into laity and clergy. Its distinctive unity consists not in its common ecclesiastical

¹⁵²Morris, Book III, I, 284.

polity, but in its acceptance of one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. Men are either Christians, or non-Christians. Those externally professing Christianity are of the visible church. "The visible Church of Jesus Christ is . . . one, in outward profession of those things, which supernaturally appertain to the very essence of Christianity, and are necessarily required in every particular Christian man."¹⁵³ Man enters this society at the time of baptism and remains (apparently) in it until he utterly renounces Christ. Even heretics, Papists, and excommunicated persons are members, for while in error they still hold the main parts of Christian truth.

Since there was no apparent connection between salvation and the visible church, Hooker was saying that the just were free to enter into any society that preached the true gospel and rightly administered the sacraments.

This Catholic Church, furthermore, is divided into a number of distinct societies or branches, each one a church within itself. Just as the souls of the Mystical Body have inward graces and virtues whereby they differ from the unjust, so the visible church has its signs of external profession "whereby the world knoweth what they are."¹⁵⁴ Since this society has the same source

¹⁵³Ibid., 285.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., 297.

of origin as the state, there is no real distinction between it and that institution. Because the visible church is a social necessity there must be order within it. An ecclesiastical polity is needed, having authority over actions, while the church itself is concerned with duties. Such duties include the administration of the Word and sacraments, prayers, and spiritual censures.¹⁵⁵ Laws of polity are those appointing in what manner the duties should be performed. Hooker preferred to use the term ecclesiastical polity instead of government in explaining the properties of churches as public Christian societies, because that term "containeth both [the] government and also whatsoever besides belongeth to the ordering of the Church in public."¹⁵⁶ Different sections of the visible church have varying governments qualified by environment, e.g., the Church of Rome, the Church of England, and so forth.¹⁵⁷ This is permissible since the Scriptures do not set up any particular government for the entire Catholic Church to follow. Matters necessary for salvation revealed in the Bible are unchangeable, but polity is not a part of such mandatory doctrine.

Such an omission in Scripture is not to be considered a disgrace, but an example of the wisdom of almighty God. Yet notwithstanding freedom of operation within this sphere, the foundation

¹⁵⁵Ibid., 356-357.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., 297.

¹⁵⁷Dirksen, 106.

of the ecclesiastical polity should be the law of reason and the examples and directives in Scripture -- guides for all courses of action.¹⁵⁸ More specifically, canons, laws, and decrees belonging to the exercise of religion, enlargement or abridgment of the ministerial function, prayer books, ceremonies, and so forth, are included within the province of church government, and admit addition or subtraction. Hooker defied any church to prove that it had not "many things established in it, which . . . the Scripture did never command."¹⁵⁹ Those rites and observances not deducible from the Bible were justified on the basis of three general propositions, namely the recognition that such practices are effectual and appropriate; the sanction of tradition and the judgment of antiquity; and the authority of the church to innovate or dispense on the basis of necessity.¹⁶⁰

From a discussion of polity in general, Hooker was naturally led to a defense of the government of the English Church. The Puritan argument that Scripture is a full and complete record of the practices of the church in Apostolic times, Hooker denied. Yet, he maintained that the Anglican regiment by bishops is the most consonant with Scripture.¹⁶¹ A system in possession from

¹⁵⁸Morris, Book III, I, 325.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., 305.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., Book V, II, 128-129.

¹⁶¹Hughes, III, 225.

time immemorial is not to be given up for a discipline (Genevan) that "no age ever had knowledge of it but only ours,"¹⁶² From Apostolic times there were distinct orders among the clergy. The preeminence of the Apostles (bishops) was supplemented by presbyters (regular "priests") and deacons (first stewards of the church and later a degree in the clergy). The ancient Fathers mentioned these three distinctions within the ecclesiastical order, which the Church of England follows to the present day.

Hooker held a relatively high view of the nature of the Christian ministry, yet his essential Protestantism is apparent in his insistence on only three clerical degrees, and his interpretation of the ministry, not as sacrificial, but as pastoral.

Holy Orders should not be considered a sacrament, and the term "priest" is a misnomer. It is true that the Fathers usually called the clergy of the Gospel by that name but this did not imply sacrifice, for Christ's death on the Cross was in no way renewable.

Without the ministry religion could not continue, Hooker explained. In ordination, besides a mere authority to do things there is given a spiritual power which signifies not only the Person of the Holy Ghost who guides, directs, and strengthens, but also the gifts of the Spirit, "abilities to do things miraculous."¹⁶³ The clerical order is instituted by God Himself, and

¹⁶²Morris, Book III, I, 334.

¹⁶³Ibid., Book V, II, 421.

men can enter it only in a lawful manner. Ministerial power (the power of order) is derived from God alone, for no human authority can institute supernatural forces and effects. Ordination makes the clergy a special estate, consecrated to perform works in which other human beings could not meddle. Once consecrated, ministers are God's forever -- their powers making an indelible mark on their souls.¹⁶⁴ Whether they preach, pray, baptize, distribute Communion, condemn, or give absolution, as disposers of God's mysteries, their words, judgments, acts, and deeds are not theirs, but the Holy Ghost's. Ministerial ignorance, non-residence, and plurality of livings are to be deplored. Yet in spite of the clergy's salutary functions and grave responsibilities, when it becomes impossible to attract a sufficient number of learned men to God's service, it is better to accept the meaner than to allow "thousands of souls grow savage, to let them live without any public service of God, to let their children die unbaptized, to withhold the benefit of the other sacrament from them, [and] to let them depart this world like Pagans" ¹⁶⁵ In following such a course, the choice is a lesser of two evils.

Since the bishops were the main target of Puritan attack, Hooker felt obliged to devote one entire book and sections of others in the Ecclesiastical Polity toward that group's defense.

¹⁶⁴Messenger, II, 349.

¹⁶⁵Morris, Book V, II, 474.

In general, in the earlier books, it was an historical method of argument which he followed. Christianity always had the episcopal type of government. To be a bishop today "is now the selfsame thing which it hath been."¹⁶⁶ While it is true that the name "bishop" in ecclesiastical writings first referred to all church governors, in short time it grew to mean such episcopal authority that the highest dignitaries exercised. This is not surprising because "things themselves are always ancients than their names."¹⁶⁷

In nature a bishop is a minister of God to whom is given not only the power of administering the Word and the sacraments, but also the power to ordain ecclesiastical persons, and a preeminence in government over presbyters as well as laymen, "a power to be by way of jurisdiction a Pastor even to Pastors themselves."¹⁶⁸

The first bishops were the Apostles, for besides being sent by Christ to preach his Gospel to the world, they also had the care of church government committed to them. The Apostles first exercised their episcopal authority at large, but later, when conditions necessitated it, in restraint (when their regiment was within some definite locale). All who followed them in an orderly

¹⁶⁶Keble, Book VIII, III, 146.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., 147.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., 148.

fashion were their lawful successors. Throughout all cities where the Apostles planted Christianity, a sequence of pastors has been noted, and the first one in every rank of progression was an Apostle or his disciple. Catalogues of bishops in a number of churches from the earliest times were collected.

All churches received from the Apostles the same faith, sacraments, and form of public regiment. At first, the government consisted of the laity being subject to a college of ecclesiastical personages (termed bishops or presbyters) stationed in every city. Contentions within the church caused the appointment of definite bishops with authority in restraint, by the Apostles who "did it not but by divine instinct."¹⁶⁹ This order was universally practiced. In time, archbishops were also named, for the purposes of better administration and the avoidance of internal confusion. They became the heads of several dioceses. Even among these there were distinctions in rank. First in dignity over all ecclesiastics was the "bishop of Rome."¹⁷⁰ The early general church councils validated these practices.

Actually, there are two theories concerning the "inequality of pastors."¹⁷¹ The first asserts that the Apostles in word and

¹⁶⁹Ibid., 167.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., 193. In time, however, the Bishop of Rome assumed powers never bestowed upon him and thus perverted his authority.

¹⁷¹Ibid., 204.

deed appointed it. This is tantamount to saying that episcopacy has the approbation of God, since the Apostles were guided in their activities by the Holy Ghost. No doubt this procedure was "established by them on whom the Holy Ghost was poured in so abundant measure for the ordering of Christ's Church."¹⁷² These facts notwithstanding, the system of government by bishops, though more consonant with Scripture and the Will of God, is not according to Scripture a matter of faith ordained by God, and therefore an unchangeable rule. Church polity is not a part of the doctrine necessary for salvation.

The second theory teaches that after the Apostles were deceased, the churches agreed among themselves for the preservation of peace and order to make one presbyter in each chief city the superior of that district and give him the power the Apostles had.

Here Hooker acknowledged that he himself "did sometimes judge [this second theory] a great deal more probable than now I do."¹⁷³ The implication seems to be, however, that either way, "divine origin" or expediency and tradition, God approves the episcopacy, for His approbation can be ascertained not only by revelation but

¹⁷²Ibid., 157.

¹⁷³Ibid., 209-210. This apparent "change of opinion" has caused some students to reject book seven as unauthentic Hooker. Such authorities merely give the historic argument of the origin of the episcopacy as Hooker's interpretation.

marry, for experience has taught that matrimony serves to remove the inconveniences of single life.

The charge that the laity no longer has a voice in the ordination of deacons and presbyters, and that in this sphere the episcopacy is supreme is inaccurate. In the early church, it was convenient for the people to assume this responsibility in part; now it would prove cumbersome. And even then, the faithful did not actually ordain ministers. They merely gave their assent. From the beginning, only ecclesiastical personages were invested with that spiritual power.

Great honor is due the prelacy, for they are the chief governors of God's Church, have many responsibilities, perform duties benefiting all, and are in fact, "the glue and soder of the public weal."¹⁷⁸ According to the ancient orders and customs of the land, the next in degree of honor to the sovereign are the chief prelates of God's Church. Men are to revere ecclesiastics without presuming to examine their worthiness. The means of esteeming the clerical order is a fixed code. Among such accepted procedure is the endowment of wealth, which becomes not the personal fortune of the prelacy, but the goods of the church. The higher clergy merely manage these treasures as the Lord's own. As chief dignitaries, they should be comfortably provided for. Their estate is higher than the lower clergy; therefore, their proportion of

¹⁷⁸Ibid., 274.

maintenance should be greater. In the ancient church, as evidenced in the writings of the early Fathers and in histories, the sole source of support of ministers was the laity, who in their donations to the church were giving back to the Lord the fruits of their prosperity originally bestowed by Him. Such a healthy attitude toward the wealth of the church and the maintenance of religious should be heeded in contemporary society. Men of the sixteenth century grudged no other estate but the clerical its just monetary recompense.

On the debit side of the ledger, however, bishops have to beware of certain disreputable tendencies. They are a sacred symbol. All look to them for guidance and example. Therefore, they should discharge their duties faithfully, not carelessly ordain or institute negligently, bestow church-livings corruptly, make visitations for gain, have disordered courts, or disregard the clergy under them.¹⁷⁹

Related to the whole topic of clerical wealth was the explosive matter of seizure of church property by the lay authorities. Hooker would "not absolutely say concerning the goods of the Church that they may in no case be seized on by men."¹⁸⁰ There are certain cases in which it is clear that God Himself approves such action and "is willing to forego for our benefit as always to use

¹⁷⁹Ibid., 306-310.

¹⁸⁰Morris, Book V, II, 456.

and convert to our benefit whatsoever our religion hath honored him withal."¹⁸¹ The dissolution of the monasteries is an example of lawful seizure because their institution was of human origin and their end for the most part, superstitious. Elizabethan divine though he was, however, Hooker did have the courage to charge that spoliation was often practiced for other than just causes, and he specifically lamented that £126,000 were taken from the church in yearly appropriations. Yet, he would wait contentedly until it pleased God to touch the hearts of men voluntarily to restore it.¹⁸²

In summary, then, Hooker believed that the Anglican Church was justified by history, if not by divine sanction, in retaining that government for itself which was of such ancient origin. The English laws of ecclesiastical polity, furthermore, were declared part of the ordinances of the realm, to be obeyed by all in the commonwealth.

Richard Hooker recognized that the Church of England was not like other reformed churches; but he believed that in purging itself of idolatry and superstition, it had in no way severed connections with the society of apostolic times.¹⁸³ It was the same church, only now it was purified and true. Affirming his

¹⁸¹Ibid.

¹⁸²Keble, Book VII, III, 323.

¹⁸³Shirley, 249.

essential and consistent concern for the continuity of unity with the past, Hooker hoped "that to reform ourselves if at any time we have done amiss, it is not to sever ourselves from the Church we were of before. In the Church we were and we are so still."¹⁸⁴

The Calvinists were wrong to urge their ceremonies and discipline on the Anglicans, for in indifferent matters no group had an authority to impose opinions on others. Churches were like diverse families, each one independent, with a right to appoint orders for themselves. It would be difficult to attain unity among the reformed churches in view of the variety of particular inducements. Even then, church polity was still by nature primarily optional.

The English reform was gradual. Laws were warily changed. Only those rites and ceremonies were removed which proved unnatural, impious, or harmful. Innocuous practices were eliminated first (e.g., abrogating the number of saints' days). Articles of sound religion, discipline, catechisms, a form of common prayer, and the purging of scandalous observances in the church followed. Finally, even those beliefs which had taken a stronger and deeper root were plucked up.¹⁸⁵

Hooker's view of the Reformation, in defending a church that was changed in essence but highly traditional in government

¹⁸⁴ Morris, Book III, I, 292.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., Book IV, I, 414-425. He was probably referring to something like the Mass.

(although he, of course, did not see it that way), implied that there was a great difference between those who erect a new commonwealth, and those who reform a decayed estate by reducing it to that perfection from which it had swerved. Actually, the Anglican Church of Hooker's era was a reformed institution which had managed to preserve degrees of continuity with the past. It was a Protestant communion which claimed to be Catholic. While it asserted the right of private judgment, in certain spheres it respected authority scrupulously. Holy Scripture was emphatically deemed to be the exclusive source of divine truth, yet the living voice of the church was recognized, and its pronouncements were revered.

For a man so sincerely convinced of the righteousness of his cause, however, there was never anything sanctimonious or pharisaical about Hooker. Even when discussing topics that caused others to resort to invective and ill will, he remained the charitable and gently persuasive apologist.

CHAPTER VI

STATE AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONSHIPS

Richard Hooker's concept of the state is the phase of his theory that authorities find the most interesting and significant. Actively stirring in the Ecclesiastical Polity, some believed, were the seeds of thought heralding the modern doctrines of social contract and popular sovereignty. Actually, however, Hooker was essentially conservative, explaining and defending a system he believed not revolutionary, but contiguous with past society.

The idea of life, man's nature, and government before Adam's sin is not clear in Hooker. After the fall of Adam and Eve, however, "the corruption of our nature being presupposed, we may not deny but that the Law of Nature doth now require of necessity some kind of regiment."¹⁸⁶ Before the actual establishment of government there was apparently a state of nature in which men were free not as individuals, but as groups, for alone human beings were insufficient to furnish themselves with the requirements of life their natures demanded. There was a natural inclination (therefore not free but a part of human nature) in men whereby they

¹⁸⁶Ibid., Book I, I, 191.

sought a gregarious life.¹⁸⁷

To temper mutual grievances, injuries, and wrongs, human beings agreed among themselves to ordain some kind of government and to appoint a ruler by consent, as group society without form was unsatisfactory. ". . . an order expressly or secretly [tacit consent] agreed upon touching the manner of their union in living together," followed.¹⁸⁸ This, the law of a commonweal or the soul of a politic body was Hooker's "social compact," which formed a definite society from groups of men. Obviously a period of arbitrary rule ensued, for "they saw that to live by one man's will became the cause of all men's misery."¹⁸⁹ The state was thus compelled to base its government upon specific laws. Though there was a universal need for such regiment to escape disorder and despotism, its type was optional. Whatever the choice, however, certain fundamental principles prevailed. The order was established by the authority of the people. The natural law to which all men are subject, presupposed that the legitimate power of making laws to bind whole societies of men was invested in those societies. For any prince to have exercised exclusively such a right without express commission from God or else by consent of the governed,

¹⁸⁷Ibid., 188.

¹⁸⁸Ibid. This original compact was vague in Hooker.

¹⁸⁹Ibid., 192.

was tyranny. Laws not founded on these precepts were invalid. In that far distant past as well as in contemporary life, the words of God Himself that every soul should be subject to higher powers, as applied to government, signified that the public power of all societies was above every individual in the state. The principal use of this authority was and is to ordain laws all must obey. Thus, though the ruler was named by the consent of the governed, his power was as divinely appointed as if he were chosen by God, for the sanctions of reason flow from the lex aeterna.¹⁹⁰

Some great and learned men are of the opinion that there is a kind of natural right in the noble, wise, and virtuous to govern the less able. Yet, since such theorists have failed to demonstrate the reasonableness of their hypothesis, "the assent of them who are to be governed seemeth necessary."¹⁹¹ And although the people are the source from which the law-giver of the state receives his power to bind, they can never resume their authority, for consent is the essence of legislation. Furthermore, once the sovereign is established, power must inhere in him or else anarchy will prevail. Hooker advised, therefore, that power be limited before being granted. Laws must be agreed upon in which men can

¹⁹⁰Munz, 98. Hooker recognized divine appointment, e.g., in the Old Testament, human appointment, and supremacy by conquest in the establishing of governments.

¹⁹¹Morris, Book I, I, 191. Aristotle held that men are naturally unequal.

clearly see their duties beforehand and know the penalties for transgressions. Yet, care should likewise be taken not to limit power so much that it loses its effectiveness. Concentration of jurisdiction is desirable because of the necessity of expedition in public affairs, the confusion attending a multitude of masters, and the natural inclination of unrestrained men to seek their own particular ends.¹⁹² The purpose of government, the common good, is unlikely to be realized without the presence in society of a general mover.

Reason further bids men to acknowledge that birth gives the right to sovereign dominion in hereditary kingdoms. Each new monarch does not receive his power anew from the people.¹⁹³ The original institution is a sufficient sanction.

The sovereign, however lawfully established, is supreme; but that does not mean that the people are in subjection, for they have willingly committed themselves to his care. Theoretically, the ruler (by human appointment) is subject to the law of reason, divine law, certain ordinances of the realm, and traditions, yet no one within or without his kingdom is superior to him.¹⁹⁴ Hooker was of the opinion that not the most limitation of royal jurisdiction is desirable, but that "the best limited power is

¹⁹²Ibid., 359.

¹⁹³Ibid., 349.

¹⁹⁴Davies, 78.

best."¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, no human positive law can be received without the approbation of the people. Legal authority resides in the community as a whole, but consent is given in three ways -- personally, by voice, act, or sign; by representation in Parliament, councils or assemblies; and by custom or the consent of preceding generations.

Human laws are either mixed, "some duty . . . all men by the law of reason . . . stand bound" to obey, and now also constrainable and punishable by human ordinance; or purely man-made, "a duty now which before was none," but which nevertheless is a matter reason teaches to be fit and convenient.¹⁹⁶ Since a principal function of the state is the enforcement of the observance of the laws of reason upon the recalcitrant, such precepts should be codified. Because statutes are made for definite nations according to a fixed set of circumstances, they will vary from country to country even though they are all based upon reason. Society, further, is not a static organization for which laws once laid down are immutable, but a dynamic, progressive entity necessitating change of statute. In addition, laws ordained for external order among men are imperfect unless they take into consideration that the will of man is obstinate and perverse.

¹⁹⁵Keble, Book VIII, III, 352.

¹⁹⁶Morris, Book I, I, 196. There was also a third type of human ordinance -- a kind of international law.

Happily, legislative power in spite of residing in the community as a whole is not majority rule, for there is a locus of sovereignty, or "the power for performance of any action with not any other to overrule it."¹⁹⁷ Most authorities correctly believe Hooker to have equated this with the person or group in possession of the veto power, which in England would be the monarch. Others, however, prefer to conclude that Hooker placed a general supremacy of the king in Parliament together with Convocation.¹⁹⁸ There is some justification for accepting both, for negatively speaking sovereign power is in the king; positively, in its law-making sense, in the Crown in Parliament. Yet, when Hooker spoke of sovereignty per se, he meant the veto power. "Touching the supremacy of power which our kings have . . . , it resteth principally in the strength of a negative voice Be it in states of regiment popular, aristocratical, or regal, principality resteth in that person, or those persons, unto whom is given the right of excluding any kind of law whatsoever it be before establishment. This doth belong unto kings, as kings."¹⁹⁹

Students have greatly admired Richard Hooker's theory of the state, and he is lauded as being the first Englishman to formulate

¹⁹⁷Dirksen, 88.

¹⁹⁸Among the major secondary authorities used, Dirksen, Houk, and D'Entrèves were the only ones to accept this broad interpretation of the locus of sovereignty.

¹⁹⁹Keble, Book VIII, III, 411.

systematically the idea of a social contract as the historical and legal basis of the body politic, and for germinating the concept of popular sovereignty.²⁰⁰ Actually, however, there was nothing radical in Hooker. He did not devise a theory like that proposed by John Locke and the modern liberals.²⁰¹ Hooker's assertion of the natural freedom of man was not the same. To him, men had a certain amount of liberty by nature, yet their consent to a form of government was apparently essential. But to acknowledge that political organization was in some way dependent upon the will of its components was something quite different from conceiving of it in the rigid terms of a contract.²⁰² Hooker made no assertion of "natural rights" in the individual prior to and independent of the state, in the spirit of Locke. He claimed no perfect state of human nature. Government had its origin in the very nature of man himself, and therefore was in accordance with the law of reason. Fallen man had no choice but to live under some form of political authority, even though his will played an important part in the creation and establishment of government.

Hooker's contract theory was little more than a common design of establishing a kind of public regiment and submission to it,

²⁰⁰ Hadly and more recently Shirley promoted these ideas in their books.

²⁰¹ Dirksen, 83. Locke's theory was that men being by nature all free, equal, and independent, no one can be put out of this state and subjected to another's political power without specific consent.

²⁰² D'Entrèves, 128.

imposed by the natural law, and ultimately God. There was no mechanical construction of society here, and Hooker's principles were "quite consistent with the traditional medieval doctrine of consent as the foundation of political authority."²⁰³

Popular sovereignty, not in a modern sense, but only insofar as political power was derived from the community as its original source, can be found in Hooker.

Finally, Hooker was far from sanctioning one theory in the Ecclesiastical Polity. "That the Christian world should be ordered by kingly regiment, the law of God doth not any where command."²⁰⁴ Democracy, oligarchy, monarchy, or any other type of government was acceptable as long as it was lawfully constituted.

The most interesting, if not the most logical and admirable of Hooker's theory of the state, was its relationship with the church, because here principles may be mentally matched with practice.

A church and commonwealth (the state) are "things in nature the one distinguished from the other. A commonwealth is one way, and a church another way, defined."²⁰⁵ The church is the religious side of the state, but the two are one in substance. A church is not a body of men separated from the commonwealth, but any society

²⁰³Ibid., 131.

²⁰⁴Keble, Book VIII, III, 346.

²⁰⁵Ibid., 328.

which upholds the true religion -- the "Catholic" religion in gross. Where the Christian Church resides in a Christian state, both comprise one society, fulfilling different functions.²⁰⁶ There is an actual identity of church and commonwealth, for the latter is simply some type of government under which men live; the former signifies the religion professed. They are two accidents of one subject. These accidents though different in name, coexist in one entity, just as, e.g., a schoolmaster and a physician (two accidents) can be one man (single subject). Furthermore, although secular law and the spiritual law of Christ contain many different offices thereby necessitating the appointment of some men to one charge and some to the other, society is not divided into two or in any way severed. Englishmen, therefore, are both members of the commonwealth and churchmen. This situation is comparable to a triangle of which any side from another angle is the base.²⁰⁷

The purpose of society, to enable men to live well, presupposes the guidance of religion. In all commonwealths, spiritual concerns are first in importance; therefore, that institution entrusted with the government of society is not limited to secular matters only. If it were, it could not properly fulfill its

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 328-330.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 330. There were grounds for the state and the church being two where the true church existed in heathen countries.

function.²⁰⁸ The church is in no way degraded by being organically bound with the state, whose origins and purposes are related.

It is logical, then, that the monarch be considered the supreme head of the church, for the church is merely one aspect of a unitary society. Scripture, reason, and history bear this out.²⁰⁹ The royal supremacy is limited in that the king is under God and the law, and of course, does not possess sacerdotal powers. The ministerial functions are strictly confined to the clergy, but the power of jurisdiction is within the province of the state. Naturally such coöperation of jurisdiction refers to the visible church only.

This dominion on the part of the monarch to exercise authority in ecclesiastical causes according to the laws of the church simply means that within his own precincts and territory, he has the right and power to command in matters of the Christian religion. No foreign state or any part of the body politic at home can lawfully overrule his decisions. The church needs the rod of corporal punishment to keep her children in obedience. Spiritual discipline is not enough. This is proved by the practice of many Christian churches in their recourse to the civil magistrates for assistance in coercing the recalcitrant. Ecclesiastical authorities, unable to effect reform alone, are thereby strengthened by

²⁰⁸Munz, 75.

²⁰⁹Shirley, 112.

secular power. Unity requires concord of action. The sovereign by cession of power is the representative not only of the whole state but of the whole church as well.²¹⁰

Scripture does not appoint that all kings should have supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs, but neither does it forbid such a course. Such supremacy is a human right that Englishmen bestowed on their sovereign. The king's headship of the church differs from Christ's in three significant ways: order (Christ has no equal), measure (God's sovereignty reaches over all, unlimited), and kind (Christ works internally; the king obviously externally).²¹¹ Naming the king head of the church in no way implies that he shares any of God's qualities. The honor and adoration properly given to Christ as Leader of the church is not transferred to the monarch. All the king's power is ultimately from God, the source of all lawful authority. Yet, as head of the church, under God, the prince has prerogatives in ecclesiastical matters as well as in civil for the ready expedition of affairs.²¹²

Making a magistrate spiritually supreme in his own dominions does not detract from the excellence of the Christian religion. The Lord is still the Head not only of the Mystical Body which man is unable to discern, but also "of every Christian politic

²¹⁰Dirksen, 223.

²¹¹Keble, Book VIII, III, 373.

²¹²Shirley, 118.

society, of every visible Church in the world."²¹³ The invisible church is controlled by Christ alone; the visible church is outwardly administered by those whom He allows to be rulers.

Since the right to make civil laws belongs to the whole commonwealth, the equal right of making church ordinances also belongs to the whole commonwealth. The clergy alone does not have the right to make rules for the church.²¹⁴ They are merely one segment of the state. It is not reasonable that they should legislate for the laity without the latter's consent, any more than it would be correct for laymen to pass laws without the approbation of the clerical estate. Individuals may not impose laws on others. Equals may not impose statutes upon their equals. Until it can be proved that some special command of Christ has perpetually bestowed the right of making ecclesiastical ordinances upon the clergy alone, the Anglican system must be regarded as most consonant with equity and reason. Whether a statute be civil or religious, it is a universal obligation all are charged to obey; therefore, all should impose the obligation. A Christian commonwealth is one society. All should participate in ordering it. Peace and justice are maintained by preserving to every estate its rights and by keeping all interests in an even balance.

²¹³Keble, Book VIII, III, 384.

²¹⁴Ibid., 403.

"The parliament of England together with the convocation annexed thereunto, is that whereupon the very essence of all government within this kingdom doth depend."²¹⁵ It consists of the king and all in the land subject to him. All are present either in person or by representation. It is absurd in a nation in which church and state are one to limit Parliament to temporal matters, "as if it might meddle with nothing but only leather and wool."²¹⁶ Religion is the chief concern of the commonwealth; therefore, every group should help formulate ecclesiastical polity. In fact, human authority has province over indifferent matters in all spheres of action.²¹⁷ Obviously none has the right to alter Christ's doctrines leading men to salvation, and when society engages upon such religious endeavors as drafting a form of public prayer, a solemn confession of the articles of faith, or ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies, the opinion of the clergy by virtue of their superior information on these topics should have greater weight. With all these qualifications considered, herein lies the excellence and effectiveness of the Anglican system: ". . . all which the wisdom

²¹⁵Ibid., 408. This was a definition of English government. The use of the word "essence" here, is not to be confused with Hooker's definition of ultimate sovereignty -- the person possessing the veto power.

²¹⁶Ibid., 409.

²¹⁷In this manner, Hooker extended the principle of representation to include the ecclesiastical as well as the civil sphere of government. He never discussed the position and powers of Convocation as distinct from Parliament, however, since this would have involved embarrassing admissions.

of all sorts can do is done for the devising of laws in the Church, [and] it is the general consent of all that giveth them the form and vigour of laws, without which they could be no more unto us than the counsels of physicians to the sick."²¹⁸

Although no one within his realm has power over him, the king is bound to receive the sacraments and instruction from the clergy. This does not lessen his supremacy, for his jurisdiction is of so large a compass that not even ecclesiastics are without its bounds. The absence of a universal authority in society omens disorder and disunion, and no religious officer by virtue of his position can claim such power. It is true that "all men are not for all things sufficient."²¹⁹ Public affairs, therefore, are divided. It is necessary to differentiate, e.g., between the ordinary jurisdiction (sacerdotal and pastoral) which belongs to the clergy alone and that "commissionary" jurisdiction wherein others are appointed to join them.²²⁰ Between both spheres is a third, the king's transcendent authority in all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil. "On all sides therefore it is confessed, that to the king belongeth power of maintaining laws made for church regiment, and of causing them to be observed; but principality of power in

²¹⁸Ibid., 410.

²¹⁹Ibid., 438-439.

²²⁰Ibid., 439.

making them . . . is the thing that we [also] attribute unto kings."²²¹ Furthermore, the monarch's prerogative of a negative voice in ecclesiastical ordinances is a practice of long-standing, dating back to the ancient church and the emperors.

The monarch although under God and "the law," is unpunishable within his realm. He is a judge of all men who live under him; but none are his judge. Here again order requires an ultimate superior of justice. If the prince offends, there is a tribunal in Heaven he is answerable to. Even ecclesiastical judges may not call their monarch before a consistory to examine, try, or excommunicate him. The kings of England have no peers within their dominions.

This was the theory of church-state relationships Hooker presented to the society of his day. It was an attempt to show that the Anglican order was a logical, reasonable, and historically contiguous system which all were bound to obey.

Now, then, did this ideology affect conscientious dissenters? In the realm of opposition, Hooker allowed at most passive resistance. He admitted human law could not order beliefs, but for public unity's sake, men were required to profess assent.²²² " . . . but the reason is not so plain wherefore human laws should

²²¹ Ibid., 417-418.

²²² Shirley, 119.

appoint men what to believe," he explained.²²³ Religious faith proper had nothing to do with outward behavior. Conformity was made a matter of obedience to the law, not a matter of conscience.²²⁴ Nothing but external acts could be the object of legal obligation.

Hooker believed that spiritual, if not civil, chaos would ensue upon the triumph of the principle of private judgment. He refused to see any difference between the continental Anabaptists and the English Puritans and to believe that separatism and the establishment of conventicles was not the final aim of Calvinism in his country.²²⁵

It is true that Hooker's estimate of the contemporary situation was not always in agreement with Elizabethan reality. He did idealize his society. He did not, however, fail to appreciate the function of Parliament in government (that whereupon the very essence of all government depends), but he was wrong to attribute to it a representative character which in those days it did not possess.²²⁶

²²³Keble, Book VIII, III, 401.

²²⁴Munz, 92.

²²⁵The Anabaptists were a radical, evangelical sect generally believed to be destructive of the social order. Conventicles were small secret gatherings that met for religious worship.

²²⁶Obviously the sixteenth century members of Parliament, especially the clergy, did not have the freedom of action that Hooker implied.

Hooker in spite of his conclusion that "the body should not be able by any just means to help itself," if the monarch became a tyrant, does not deserve to be placed in the school of state worship.²²⁷ He sincerely believed that religion was the goal to which the state must tend, and was shocked that it should be regarded as a mere political device.²²⁸ Yet, he did content himself with the meaningless platitude that the ruler's power was limited by the Headship of Christ, and that the monarch must answer to a heavenly tribunal for his violations of the law.

His basic conception of the identity of church and commonwealth was particularly useful insofar as it could be made to explain plausibly the concept of royal supremacy; and yet he was sincere in his belief of the unbroken continuity of the church, and his conviction that Englishmen had lived for many centuries under similar arrangements. Actually, Hooker's method was not a completely stubborn apology for what was. Rather, it was an attempt to avoid undesirable elements of the status quo by shifting emphasis from the unfavorable and weak features to the admirable features. He saw in the Tudor state the rule of law and limited monarchy.

Distinct advantages were enjoyed by the English system,

²²⁷Keble, Book VIII, III, 350.

²²⁸D'Entrèves, 142.

Hooker concluded. First, all decisions of doubtful matters and corrections of "things amiss" were rectified by the order of law. Second, what power the king had he possessed by law, the bounds and limits of which were known. Third, the entire community was thereby given security and peace. Fourth, every estate made laws.²²⁹ Apparently, therefore, the core of all of Hooker's arguments on the relations of church and state was the importance and necessity of unity in society. The idea of a divided sovereignty repelled Hooker as did the disrupting threat of unrestrained Puritanism.

Although the defects and inadequacies of Hooker's theory of church-state relationships are glaringly apparent when viewed in a practical perspective, no doubt his was the best defence of the Elizabethan and Anglican establishments that could have been written at the time.

²²⁹Keble, Book VIII, III, 443.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

All who study the life and writings of Richard Hooker cannot help but be impressed with his sincerity, intelligence, and charity. He emerges from a period of intense emotions and bitter polemic as a thoroughly likable, virtuous, pacific man, convinced of his course yet untainted by pharisaical righteousness, and pursuing his task without being tempted by any wordly preferments. Truly, "he saw the questions in dispute in relation to first principles on which an agreement might be possible and which made the personal passions of controversy dwindle."²³⁰

Hatred and arrogance were foreign to Hooker's nature, yet Izaak Walton's characterization of a completely simple, meek, and saintly man was unreal and inaccurate. Hooker was shrewd, and could not resist occasional irony and harmless fun directed at the absurdities of his opponents.²³¹ Wanton ignorance annoyed him, and ill-founded criticism he regarded with contempt. His knowledge was profound and encompassed the entire content of the arts

²³⁰Edward Dowden, Puritan and Anglican Studies in Literature (New York, 1901), 72.

²³¹On one occasion he reminded the Puritans that poverty in Apostolic times was not confined to the clergy; the laity also shared in the distinction.

and humanities. In his sympathy for and use of diverse literature, he evidenced a truly Renaissance spirit.²³² The ideas set forth in the Ecclesiastical Polity were doubtless liberal for their day, "not in the sense of radical," but in their relation to the best thought of both contemporary and past writers.²³³

Contained in the eight books of the Polity and Hooker's extant sermons is a whole way of life -- an entire system of relationships. Men of the sixteenth century and subsequent eras who have read his works have seen clearly life in perspective, even if they did not agree with his philosophy. There was, of course, at the apex of all creation, God, who ordered the universe with eternal laws. Each creature had his place and was bound by respective precepts. Human beings were endowed with reason enabling them to fulfill their divine destiny. What essential knowledge they could not fathom through the judicious use of this faculty, God revealed to them. Men were bound to obey some ordinances and authorities forever; others were of a mutable nature. As creatures of God, human beings were obliged to render adoration and devotion to Him; as members of a church they had still other, although related, obligations. Happily, because in a Christian commonwealth, the

²³²Richard Hooker, Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: The Fifth Book, ed., Ronald Bayne (London, 1902), xvii.

²³³Houk, 3.

church and the state were one, there was unity in ordering life, for supreme lawful authority centered in the person of the sovereign. This complete ideology with all its ramifications was developed with scholarship, persuasion, and considerable logic. For contemporaries who adhered to it, it must have been comforting; for those who opposed it, thought-provoking. Yet like all theorists, Richard Hooker's concepts are vulnerable to criticism and question.

Before pointing out inconsistencies and defects in Hooker's thought, however, it is only just to recognize that he was concerned not only with theoretical principles and conclusions, but with an extremely enterprising organization as well -- the Tudor state. Hooker was too close to the political reality of that institution to condemn it; and yet reading between the lines of some of the passages in the Polity, we have the feeling that he wished certain conditions were otherwise.²³⁴ With a reverence for antiquity he connected the present with the past, while leaving room and scope for future developments. Had Hooker believed that the Tudor system was essentially an innovation he could not in all honesty have defended it. Existing institutions as he saw them were ancient in origin; their continuity with the past unbroken. What changes had occurred were merely the justifiable result of dynamic growth. The commonwealth (both church and state) was not a static

²³⁴Notable among these were the practice of the government in "robbing" the church, patronage, inferior status of the clergy, and so forth.

unit, but a living organism. Actually, this is how Hooker explained the relationship of the old to the new.²³⁵ His greatness did not lie in "daring novelty or in boldness of thought," but in connecting the past with the present, in raising controversial questions to the level of general principles, and in emphasizing certain contributions of ancient and medieval thought.²³⁶ Hooker's interpretation of the ideas of consent, of the general supremacy of laws, of representation, and of a mixed constitution are examples of the manner in which medieval thought could be stretched to support changing attitudes and situations. His emphasis on these concepts plus those of reason and nature, proved that he accepted some of the best of medieval thought, even though he used it to meet the necessities of political development.

Such a course resulted in the via media, or a middle course between Catholicism and the theology and ideology of the Reformation. The Anglican system which Hooker theorized, in many ways was a comfortable one, emphasizing comprehensiveness. While admonishing all to obey the law of the land, it was elastic enough to include almost any group. The concept of the invisible and visible church, theological compromise and indefiniteness, optional ecclesiastical polity and external conformity were features with a

²³⁵Hughes, III, 217.

²³⁶D'Entrèves, 89-90.

potential to persuade every Englishman he not only could, but did belong to a harmonious entity, which he would be unreasonable to reject.

Yet with all Hooker's good sense and intentions granted, he was not always logical and consistent. Recognition of this has caused students to charge him with following the path of expediency. His distinction between the power of ministerial order and the power of a combined lay and clerical ecclesiastical jurisdiction was unsatisfactory. Similarly, the explanation of the supremacy of the sovereign under Christ was an ineffective argument. The assertion of the oneness of church and state, the right of the clergy to participate in all legislation, and religion being the highest care with which the commonwealth was entrusted, in no way proved the satisfactory condition of the church and the clerical estate. The sovereign was unpunishable on earth. He had the veto power over all legislation. The right to appoint bishops, approval for the formulation of church regulations, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, were his.²³⁷ Although the king was not a minister, apparently he could prevent the performance of actions (the administration of sacraments) which were the cause of grace. While he may not have intended it to be so, Hooker's theory gave power over the supernatural order to the natural order, and the power of

²³⁷Munz, 89.

religion to the temporal authority.²³⁸ The Elizabethan church in all but name was a state department, and Hooker was an Erastian, in spite of the claim of some authorities to the contrary.²³⁹ At its best, Hooker's church was a federal union between groups of believers in a common Christianity, whose conformity was a matter of obedience, not conscience; at its worst it was a national church actually excluding large segments of the population.

Hooker was forced into being an Erastian. His whole theory of laws and authority compelled him to assert supremacy for someone. Society to him was one; therefore he could not accept two supreme powers -- one for the church and one for the state. The pope had been eliminated; thus there was really no one left to act as the general mover of society but the monarch. This dilemma, while it does not prove Hooker less an Erastian, makes him logical although starting from a false premise. It was when he tried to reconcile rationally facts and viewpoints that were actually

²³⁸Dirksen, 139.

²³⁹The word Erastian is derived from the ideology of Thomas Erastus, a Swiss physician and theologian of the sixteenth century, who held that the civil jurisdiction of the church should be restricted. At present the word is applied to those who favor the control of the church by the state. Of all the authorities used, Davies and Munz were the only ones who argued Hooker was not an Erastian. Munz reasoned that because Hooker looked upon the church as a supplement to the state, he should not be classified as an Erastian. Davies contended that Erastianism does not consist in recognizing that the state has power in religious matters or that the laity can participate in ecclesiastical legislation. Neither authority gave a definition of Erastianism. Perhaps they construed the term in a sense different from the accepted meaning. It is difficult to abstract their full appraisal of this issue.

contradictory, that Hooker looked worse.

Furthermore, Hooker's admirable supremacy of the eternal and natural laws which so logically and convincingly formed a foundation for theoretical life, society, and human action, pales and loses some of its quality when viewed in the perspective of the sovereign authority of the monarch. Merely to assert the supremacy of the law over the prince is disappointing. One wants to know what breaches between the two consist of, and how they are solved. In the Ecclesiastical Polity in spite of this decided emphasis on law and especially the law of nature, there is no real discussion or reconciliation of the problem of a conflict between human ordinances and the higher laws of reason and God. This leads to the conclusion that Hooker did not resolve the dilemma because he could not, without involving himself in embarrassing contradictions. Hooker surely must have realized as he proceeded with the Polity that it would be impossible for him to explain logically royal supremacy and the sovereignty of the Queen in Parliament in terms of the philosophy of law in his earlier books. Therefore, he was forced to generalize and even to become inconsistent and illogical.

Yet these facts granted, when regarded as a contemporary theorist and apologist of Elizabethan society it doubtless required some courage to tell Queen Elizabeth that her supremacy was limited, no matter how speculatively, and that her power originally

came from the people.²⁴⁰ It must also be remembered that Hooker was not exclusively defending the status quo, but was naturally drawn to idealizing Elizabethan England. The actual was made as perfect as his theory would permit.

Hooker's appraisal of Puritanism was colored by his idea of the need for unity in society. He saw in Calvinism an appeal to irrational elements. It was non-historical, destructive of learning and of civil and ecclesiastical laws. Its acceptance would veritably turn the world upsidedown.²⁴¹ Hooker was successful in showing that Puritan pretensions were inconsistent with the political and ecclesiastical structure of England in the sixteenth century; but he probably would have seen similar dangers in any body that sought independent existence within the commonwealth. Naturally he saw few if any faults in his own religion, but he was really quite an expert in pointing out areas where the Calvinists were inconsistent and ridiculous.

To members of the episcopal party, as a contemporary document, the Ecclesiastical Polity must have proven an excellent argument against the Puritan cause, and a shrewd exposé of their foibles.

²⁴⁰It is true that the eighth book of the Polity containing the discussion of church-state relationships did not come out until 1648, yet the first five books included these ideas that might conceivably have offended the ruling authority.

²⁴¹Davies, 41. In Hooker's opinion, the acceptance of Puritanism within the commonwealth would mean the separation of church and state.

Fortunately, however, the merits of the Polity do not depend upon its evaluation of the Puritan crisis. As a philosophical treatment of the origin of law and authority, the work is a masterpiece, even considering that Hooker was indebted to St. Thomas and the Schoolmen for many of his basic concepts. This combined with its theological aspects has made the Ecclesiastical Polity the foundational work in the development of a theory of Anglicanism, and has given that system a basis upon which to ramify its position further.

It is true that a national church in the old sense has finally disappeared in England, due to the acceptance of the principles and policies of toleration. Hooker's great apology for the Elizabethan Establishment was thus made obsolete. Although his main argument has lost its purpose and effectiveness, there is still a certain "persistent relevance" in his views on reason.²⁴² And because his concepts did not survive in their original purity and with their intended significance, does not mean that they have been lost forever. Certain of Hooker's ideas were transformed and became part of the living tradition of English political thought, e.g., the via media. From the early years of the seventeenth century, furthermore, the Church of England manifested a developing Hookerism -- that is ideas derived from Hooker's writings.²⁴³

²⁴²Herbert H. Henson, The Church of England (Cambridge, 1939), 68.

²⁴³Hughes, III, 217.

Hooker's range of learning was amazing. He drew from classical, biblical, patristic, scholastic, and contemporary sources. The really outstanding feature of his work is its unity and coherence. "No writer possessed to a greater degree the ability to see the abstract principle embedded in the concrete reality."²⁴⁴ His style evidences great dignity, balance, eloquence, and lucidity.²⁴⁵

Hooker's theory of the origin of the state revealed astute analysis, although it would be wrong to consider him the conscious precursor of any modern theories of the state. In most phases of thought he was essentially a conservative figure. Later theorists read his works and found in them convenient justifications for their own ideas, notably Harrington, Sidney, and Locke.²⁴⁶ Unintentionally, perhaps, in identifying the spiritual and temporal welfare of the individual subject with the monarch, he heightened the detachment and worth of the monarch, and doubtless created an atmosphere of trust and respect for the royal ruler that really took root once toleration became de facto; but he intended no Leviathan.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴Davies, 34.

²⁴⁵Barry, 58.

²⁴⁶Shirley, 201-220.

²⁴⁷Thomas Hobbes was the author of the Leviathan --an absolute, all-powerful state.

Besides this, Hooker was unusual among sixteenth-century Protestant thinkers for his optimistic views on human nature. Another admirable feature of his theory was his liberal opinion on salvation, and he probably went further than any Anglican in his century when he argued that a Roman Catholic could be saved despite errors in the cardinal doctrines of faith.²⁴⁸ In the Ecclesiastical Polity, in his sermons and in his dispute with Walter Travers, Hooker proved that his knowledge of the Roman faith came from Catholic as well as Protestant sources.

Hooker's ambiguous and guarded resolution of that whole touchy area of differences of opinion was an admission that "in matter of opinion, the law doth not make that to be truth which before was not . . ., but it manifesteth only and giveth men notice of that to be truth the contrary whereunto they ought not before to have believed."²⁴⁹ Hooker allowed and approved differences of opinion, but unless a man could prove by reasonable demonstration his conscientious objections, he had no right to disobey authority. This was tantamount to saying that in conscience man was free but outwardly he must conform. Hooker was not modern enough to accept the limitation of obedience to the sovereign power in political matters only. That was a concern for later theorists.

²⁴⁸W. K. Jordan, The Development of Religious Toleration in England (London, 1932), I, 226-227.

²⁴⁹Keble, Book VIII, III, 401.

In the final analysis, Richard Hooker emerges as a transitional figure in the change from medieval to modern thought. He was insistent upon proving that the society and institutions of his day had not severed their bonds with the past; and yet he considered the commonwealth to be a living organism. Necessary changes in the church and state, therefore, were permissible. Although there is still much to admire in his writings from literary, philosophical, and political points of view, the functional tenets of Richard Hooker's theory of Anglicanism have generally been limited in influence to England and more especially to the Anglican Church.

CRITICAL ESSAY ON AUTHORITIES

I. Primary Material

Source materials for this thesis include the use of several editions of Hooker's Works: John Spenser, ed., Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie (London, 1604); John Gauden, ed., The Works of Mr. Richard Hooker Vindicating the Church of England as truly Christian and duly Reformed in Eight Books of Ecclesiastical Polity (London, 1662); John Keble, ed., The Works of that Learned and Judicious Divine Mr. Richard Hooker, 3 Vols. (Oxford, England, 1888); and Christopher Morris, ed., Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, 2 Vols. (London, 1954). Keble's is the standard compilation of Hooker's writings, and contains the eight books of the Polity, all the extant sermons, and a long preface by Keble. The wording of the Polity is essentially the same in all the editions, but each one is important for its editorial preface.

Two annotated commentaries on individual books of the Polity are Ronald Bayne, ed., Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: The Fifth Book (London, 1902); and Raymond Aaron Houk, ed., Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity: Book VIII (New York, 1931). Each contains a reprint of the respective book under consideration with annotated footnotes, in addition to a useful preface. Houk's forward is devoted to explaining the circumstances occasioning the writing of the Ecclesiastical Polity, and to determining the authenticity of the latter three books. Bayne's preface emphasizes Hooker's life and his contributions as a "national divine."

A volume of sermons, Richard Hooker, Certaine divine tractates and other godly sermons (London, 1618), is helpful in determining Hooker's theology. William Covel, A iust and temperate defence of the five books of ecclesiastical policie (London, 1613), is an answer to contemporary criticism of the Polity. Its purpose is to re-explain the theology of Hooker.

II. Secondary Materials

There are several secondary works devoted exclusively to an explanation and interpretation of Richard Hooker's thought. Each of them concentrates on only one phase of his theory, e.g., his ecclesiastical, political, or philosophical ideas, and does not attempt to give an account of the total Hooker. Furthermore, they are more concerned with either placing Hooker in the history of

thought, comparing his ideas with other religious groups, or tracing his influence on subsequent thinkers. Hooker's theological concepts are either ignored, or summarized as "Protestant."

Hooker's first real biographer was Izaak Walton, The Lives of John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, George Herbert, and Robert Sanderson (London, 1927). Interestingly and amusingly written, yet slavishly laudatory, it was responsible for several false interpretations of Hooker's life and character. Church of England Biographies (London, n.d.), is a paraphrase of Walton's Life, and therefore of little value. C. J. Sisson, The Judicious Marriage of Mr. Hooker and the Birth of the Laws of the Ecclesiastical Polity (London, 1940) is the most recent contribution to the knowledge of the life of Hooker and the publication of the Polity. Sisson disproves by the painstaking labors of research, the inaccuracies contained in Walton. All writing after him acknowledge their debt to his careful scholarship. The chief merit of Cletus F. Dirksen, A Critical Analysis of Richard Hooker's Theory of the Relation of Church and State (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1947) is that the author compares and contrasts Hooker's theories with those of Catholicism and Puritanism, relative to church polity. He does not, however, devote sufficient space to Hooker's ideology as such. His explanations of the Catholic and Calvinist positions are far too extensive for the scope of the work, and his direct quotations from Hooker much too long and numerous. He had a wealth of material to work with, and considering that his investigation was a doctoral dissertation, it is unfortunate that he did not make better use of them. Peter Munz, The Place of Hooker in the History of Thought (London, 1952) is a scholarly work judging Hooker's place in the history of thought by comparing him with St. Thomas, Marsilius of Padua, Aristotle, and Plato. Munz stresses Hooker's rationalism and believes Hooker was a failure in that he stood looking at modern problems and was baffled by the complexity of reconciling medieval thought with contemporary developments. An explanation of Hooker's political ideas and their relationship to, and influence on, modern political theorists can be found in F. J. Shirley, Richard Hooker and Contemporary Political Ideas (London, 1949). His conclusions are generally sound, but he tends to read too much into the Polity and into Hooker's influence in relation to modern developments. Shirley refuses to accept book seven as genuine Hooker and feels that his subject should not be regarded as a High Anglican. E. T. Davies, The Political Ideas of Richard Hooker (London, 1946) discusses the background of Presbyterianism and the life, writings, and ideas of Hooker in their political implications. Davies proves to be more explanatory than interpretative, and evidences a great admiration for Hooker. He finds no really clear-cut democratic concepts in Hooker and believes that although admirable in many phases, Hooker's political theory bore the hall-mark of contemporary circumstances in its failure or neglect to advance a theory of popular sovereignty expressed in the

Crown in Parliament. Because it presupposes a rather thorough understanding of theology, philosophy, and political thought, Alexander P. D'Entrèves, The Medieval Contribution to Political Thought (Oxford, England, 1939) is not a good book to begin with. It was originally a series of lectures at Oxford and is very analytical. D'Entrèves concludes that Hooker served as a transitional link in the chain of thought from medieval to modern ideology, building on past historical experience and concepts, and connecting them with present developments.

W. K. Jordan, The Development of Religious Toleration in England, Vol. I (London, 1932) contains a section on Hooker. Because he believed in a unitary society, Hooker was unable to formulate a theory of tolerance, Jordan explains, and yet his views on salvation were extremely advanced and praiseworthy. Also discussing Hooker relative to this subject and political thought, is J. W. Allen, A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century (London, 1928). His conclusions agree with those of Jordan, but Allen further believes that Hooker laid too much stress on reason and ascribed to it too much perfection.

Philip Hughes, The Reformation in England, Vol. III (New York, 1954) accords Hooker a much less important place in history than the other authorities. He comments that Hooker is no more than a private individual and that more than this must not be claimed for him. Hughes does recognize the relative worth of the Polity, however. Ernest C. Messenger, The Reformation The Mass and The Priesthood, Vol. II (London, 1937) discusses the chief religious issues and theories under Mary, Elizabeth, and the Stuarts. A small section is devoted to Hooker's interpretation of the ministry and the Holy Eucharist. Messenger is not impressed by Hooker. Alfred Barry, ed., Masters in English Theology (London, 1877) is not an explanation of Hooker's theology, but a commentary on his life and the Polity. It is very complimentary, yet concise and interesting. Long before Sisson, Barry refused to accept Walton's interpretation of Hooker's character. A chapter-by-chapter explanation of book five of the Polity is Francis Paget, An Introduction to the Fifth Book of Hooker's Treatise of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity (Oxford, England, 1899). It is helpful to a certain extent, but too laudatory. No interpretation is given; merely explanation and that sometimes harder to understand than Hooker himself.

Nicholas Bernard, Clavi Trabeales (London, 1661) contains a section of the Ecclesiastical Polity that Bernard claimed was left out of the sixteenth century editions of Hooker's work, but was authentic. That portion is in Keble's edition in the eighth book. Benjamin Hoadly, The Original and Institution of Civil Government (London, 1710), includes among other things what the author believed to be Hooker's ideas on the origins of the state. He is another example of finding in Hooker what he was looking for.

Several church histories furnished important details. Thomas

Fuller, The Church History of Britain From the Birth of Jesus Christ until the Year 1648, Vol. V (London, 1845) is helpful in understanding the Travers-Temple episode. A fine explanation of the vestiges of Hooker's influence on the Anglican Church of today is in Herbert H. Henson, The Church of England (Cambridge, 1939). W. H. Frère, The English Church in the Reigns of Elizabeth and James I: 1588-1625 (London, 1904), contains nothing of import, but is good background material. A pious, explanatory account of the Elizabethan Church is in Frederick G. Lee, The Church Under Queen Elizabeth: An Historical Sketch, Vol. II (London, 1880). The section dealing with Hooker although comprising accepted truths concerning his character and worth, goes to the extreme in praise.

Helpful in understanding the society in which Hooker lived is Henry W. Clark, History of English Conformity, 2 Vols. (London, 1911). Edward Dowden, Puritan and Anglican Studies in Literature (New York, 1901), attempts a literary rather than a controversial approach to a study of the Polity, and concludes that Hooker's influence was in great measure posthumous.

III. Articles

Several magazine articles also provided background material. Harden Craig, "Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity: First Form," Journal of the History of Ideas (January, 1944), V, argues that the latter three books of the Polity were ready at the time of the initial publication, but were revised because the routing of the Puritans made their content antiquated. A concise but cursory discussion of the main ecclesiastical ideas of Hooker can be found in Carter G. Sidney, "Richard Hooker," Church Quarterly Review (January, 1945), CXXXIX. Maurice Bevenot in "The Catholicism of Richard Hooker," Hibbert Journal (October, 1942), XLI, concludes that on the main points of theology, e.g., the Real Presence, and the Sacrifice of the Mass, Hooker and the Puritans were in essential agreement; therefore the so-called "Catholicism" of Richard Hooker did not point to a reunion with the Roman Church. J. S. Marshall, "Richard Hooker and the Anglo-Saxon Ideal," Sewanee Review (Autumn, 1944), LII, is a brief examination of Hooker's theory of natural law.

APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Marilyn Jean Becic has been read and approved by three members of the Department of History.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

Date

Signature of Adviser